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Modern Language Teaching at the Mid-Century

California continues to grow and change at an unprecedented rate. Modern language teaching, in fact all education—elementary, high school, junior college, college, and university—faces many problems which have been accentuated by the rapid increase in population during the past decade. Modifications must be made in educational planning and practice if we are to keep abreast of the State's changing interests and needs.

California is growing at the rate of one thousand people a day. Every week we are gaining the equivalent of a city the size of Roseville, Calexico, or Turlock. From 1940 to 1950, the population of California increased some fifty per cent, while during the same period the number of youngsters under the age of five grew 144 per cent. The public school enrollment, which determines the number of teachers needed, is expected to jump from 11½ million in 1947 to 21½ million by 1956. This means that between now and 1956 California will have to find approximately sixty thousand new teachers, two-thirds of whom will be needed in elementary schools.

Just prior to World War II, a quarter of the young people of college age were enrolled in colleges or universities. But the President's Commission on Higher Education reported in 1947 a national attendance goal of at least 4,600,000 youths between 18 and 21 years of age by 1960. Should this objective be reached and should California's share of the national total remain the same as it was in 1939-40, nearly 370,000 young people from 18 to 21 will be enrolled in California's institutions of higher education.

Modern language teaching has a unique and stimulating role to play in the years ahead. It must concern itself with providing experience and opportunities for a record number of students, while at the same time improving and broadening its services. This dual responsibility requires the analysis of many fundamental procedures and issues, the definition of objectives, and the development of new instruc-

This article is an abridgment of the address given by Dr. J. Burton Vasche, Associate Superintendent of Public Instruction, State of California, at the Spring Meeting of the Modern Language Association of Southern California held at Santa Barbara College of the University of California on April 25, 1953.

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tional techniques and materials. Let us consider briefly various aspects of the problem.

1. *Mastery of language is a fundamental part of education.* The ability to communicate clearly with our fellow men, in our own community and in the larger communities of the state, the nation, and the world, becomes more significant in these times of rapid growth and change. Increased speed in travel and improved communication by radio and television have made the world much smaller. Along with these changes comes the necessity of redefining and strengthening relationships between our country and the other nations of the world. In order to understand the people of other countries, it is important that we understand their language. Mastery of language can be achieved through education, and in the light of present needs, our schools and colleges have a major responsibility in providing this necessary language training for our youth.

2. *Historically, the role of language study in universities has always reflected the changing interests and trends of nations.* If we examine the development of universities in the Middle East, in Europe, and in the United States, we discover that the roots of higher education centered in the fields of ancient and romance languages.

In recent times, emphasis in our colleges has been shifted to the utilitarian or practical aspects of language study. A knowledge of foreign languages is essential in order to carry on much of the world's business and industry.

3. *Clear and definite statements of purpose should be formulated for the teaching of modern language.* Recently the state of Illinois conducted a detailed study of the role of the public school in the nation's security.¹ One section deals with the role of foreign languages in our national security. This project represents a charter of responsibilities which might well form the basis for study and adaptation in other states.

Similarly, the conference on foreign languages in American education called by the United States Commissioner of Education in 1953 defined the hallmarks of sound language teaching.² These studies emphasize the need for developing such specific statements of purpose as:

Modern language teaching must be concerned with the development of skills, understandings, attitudes, appreciations, and vocational competence.

¹Charles W. Sanford, Harold C. Hand, and William B. Spalding, *The Schools and National Security* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1951), pp. 62-168.

²Conference on "The Role of Foreign Languages in American Schools," U.S. Office of Education, Washington, D.C., January 15-16, 1953.

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4. *Current national and international, social, economic, and political conditions have significant implications for the teaching of foreign language.* There has been a noticeable increase in travel by Americans to foreign countries, stimulated largely by the speed of air transportation. There is every indication that this travel will be further stimulated in the years ahead and that we shall have more and more summer trips to Europe, Asia, and South America taken by young and old alike; nationals of other countries will make similar visits to America. Exchanges of teaching personnel at schools and colleges will be continued, as well as exchanges of students and professional personnel in other fields.

A great deal has been published pointing up the significance of language study in light of the grave and involved basic problems surrounding relations between nations. Leaders in the development of atomic energy, for example, have stated publicly that they are not concerned about the atom, but they are concerned that the people of America learn to live with the atom. Jet propulsion is contemplated in commercial airlines sometime between now and 1960.

These forces accentuate the need for developing the kind of a program in our educational institutions which will lead to the mastery of understandings, skills, and attitudes in the field of communication, including the mastery of one or more foreign languages.

5. *Study of modern language should begin early in a child's education and continue through elementary and secondary school.* A conference dealing with modern language studies in the elementary school was recently held in the nation's capital. The public schools of our country should give consideration to developing a definite program of language instruction beginning early in the child's education, preferably in the lower grades, and then extending into the colleges and universities. Such a program would provide our young people with background experience and knowledge on which to base their professional goals. In Europe it has been customary for the young child to learn as many as three or four languages, and it has not been uncommon for a business man or a student to learn to speak and write as many as eight or nine different languages. With the nations of the world becoming increasingly interdependent, the skills and understandings derived from language study will have definite vocational value for the business and professional man.

6. *The study of modern languages is an important component of every sound program in general education.* Many issues must be resolved before agreement can be reached as to the future role and trend

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of modern language teaching. Newspapers recently reported the following: "Supported by a grant of \$120,000 from the Rockefeller Foundation, a three-year inquiry into the role which foreign languages and literatures now play and should hereafter play in American life was begun in the fall by the Modern Language Association of America, under the direction of Dr. William R. Parker, Executive Secretary of the MLA. Concerned to give language learning a more functional place in American life, with a view to both America's present position of world leadership and the practical needs of her citizens, the MLA will seek the advice of scientists, social scientists, teachers in all fields of the humanities, leaders in business, government, education, and many other areas."

At about the same time the following article appeared in one of our national professional publications: "Three-fourths of the high-school principals in one eastern state believe that colleges should drop foreign languages from their requirements."

By way of answer to the preceding two statements let us look at the modern language enrollment picture in the secondary schools, junior colleges, and state colleges of California. The Division of Secondary Education, California State Department of Education, recently analyzed enrollments in subject fields for the 390,907 pupils reported in grades nine through twelve in California high schools during the school year 1951-52. Analysis shows that 112,099 pupils, or twenty-eight and seven-tenths per cent of the total enrollment in this group, were in foreign language classes; 78,333 were in Spanish, 18,949 in Latin, and 12,194 in French. The remainder were in German or Italian.

Classes in Spanish enroll 78,333 pupils, of whom 48,884 are in beginning Spanish, 22,739 in second year, 5,548 in third year, and 1,162 in fourth year. Latin is next with 18,949, of whom 11,096 are beginning students, 6,712 second-year students, 916 third-year students, and 225 fourth-year students. French classes total 12,194 pupils with 7,054 in first year, 3,959 in second year, 986 in third year, and 195 in fourth year. Classes in German total 2,248 pupils, with 1,264 in beginning German, 763 in second year, and 221 in third year. Classes in Italian have 375 pupils, with 268 in first year, the remainder in second year.

The latest available figures on junior college class size show that in October 1950, 9,817 students in fifty California junior colleges were enrolled in 544 modern language courses. This is 19.6 per cent of the total enrollment. These same fifty junior colleges had 95 full-time teachers in the field of language, and 23 additional teachers who taught

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in other fields (17 in the social sciences), making a total of 118 teachers.³

The nine California state colleges reported, in the fall of 1952, a total of 1,912 students enrolled in 278 foreign language classes. Forty-three full-time teachers are employed in the state colleges as foreign language teachers. The 1,912 state college students enrolled in foreign languages are divided as follows: French, 665; German, 396; Spanish, 772; Norwegian, 11; Italian, 50; Latin, 18. I have no information immediately available concerning foreign language enrollments in the University of California or in the various private institutions of higher learning.

7. *Well-trained language teachers must be available to meet increasing enrollments in institutions of higher learning.* Every citizen of California must be concerned that well-qualified teachers be available in sufficient quantity to meet the increased enrollments which face our schools and colleges. Since the teaching of modern languages is a field of high specialization, it is especially important that qualified personnel be available for the upper secondary, junior college, college and university levels. University presidents are alarmed at the small number of graduate students preparing for service as college teachers. This means that, as our peak enrollments reach the college level, there is certain to be a lack of teachers in all fields. Therefore more young men and women must be recruited and encouraged to study for the Ph.D. degree in modern languages as well as in other fields where languages are used as a skilled tool.

8. *The role of modern language teaching in teacher education must be defined and programs strengthened wherever needed.* A sound program of teacher education must be subjected to constant study and modification. The Modern Language Association of Southern California must take an active part in developing a program of teacher education which scrutinizes carefully the role of foreign languages and of language teachers in general education. Your association will have to work very closely with its counterpart in the north on a program of action. There are two basic questions: (1) What competencies and experiences should *all* teachers possess in the field of modern language? (2) What special skills and competencies should teachers of modern languages possess?

All revisions of California teaching credentials are made upon the basis of long-term study by cross-section committees assigned the re-

³Further information concerning junior college class size and load may be obtained from an article in *California Schools*, April, 1953.

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sponsibility of studying each specific credential. Each committee is appointed by the Director of Education and is composed of school administrators, teachers, college staff members, and other interested parties. It studies the needs and requirements for the credential and recommends those changes which will insure greater competence on the part of the teacher.

Here are the questions which are considered by the committees as they endeavor to study needs in teacher education: (1) What are the functions which teachers perform in California schools? (2) What qualifications, knowledge, skills, and abilities do teachers need in order to perform successfully the services authorized by the credential under study? (3) What training and/or experience most readily develops the kind of competence needed? (4) What procedures of gathering data and analyzing jobs in terms of the teacher's performance will aid in determining answers to these questions? (5) How can credential requirements be formulated to insure the development of the required degree of competence? The answers to these questions furnish a foundation upon which the program is presented for careful consideration to the groups of teachers throughout the state for their evaluation, criticism, suggestions, and approval.

The concern of this Association and of its friends in the teaching profession should be that of defining the future role which you and your Association will play in the modern language field. Here is the challenge and opportunity to develop patterns of general and professional education which will insure skills, competencies, objectives, and attitudes of the highest order.

9. *Professional coöperation will lead to improvement of all aspects of modern language teaching in the schools and colleges of California.* The State Department of Education is pledged to work with the Modern Language Association of Southern California on behalf of the richest resources which this or any other state possesses—its children and youth. We must provide opportunities which will encourage and stimulate all teachers to share in the interests of an improved program in modern language teaching. This conference and others like it, workshops, institutes, summer travel, curriculum study projects, joint authorship of instructional materials, and group discussions are some of the means available for achieving effective coöperation.

10. *The teaching of modern languages provides a challenge and an opportunity to all educational leadership.* There is no limit to the future of education in California. This Association has every resource for developing the finest possible modern language program. May it

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be your aim to achieve a full and careful definition of the role of foreign language study in American life, and may this concept be translated into the kinds of abilities which all teachers *should* have, as well as those which specialists in modern language *must* have in order to be truly outstanding teachers.

Such a sound and comprehensive program will not cost any significant sum of money. It will be developed upon the basis of labor and mutual understanding, founded upon critical examination of purposes, the sharing of good things that successful teachers have found stimulating to their students, and based upon every teacher's dedication to the teaching profession, as well as to the basic principles and ideals of the American way of life.

The State of California has one of the finest public school systems of any state in the nation. The people of California have always been generous in their support of education. It is in the atmosphere of growth and change that dedicated citizens must join hands and march forward on behalf of modern language teaching.

California State Department of Education

Promising Leads for High-School Foreign Language

Previous writers have already furnished so many promising leads for high-school foreign language that I am reluctant to add any more. Nevertheless, I have long been concerned with the differences in morale prevailing in departments of foreign languages in different parts of the country, sometimes even within the same community or school. Not infrequently, these differences range from ecstasy to resignation. Why is it that in very similar circumstances some departments are enthusiastic about their classes and confident of the success and value of their work while others feel that the world is against them?

From observation of teaching in the schools of many states, I believe that the reason can be found in the degree to which certain attitudes and practices prevail—attitudes and practices that in many cases spell the difference between increasing rather than static enrollments, and enthusiasm rather than frustration in one's work. These differences in attitudes and practices number at least six. In no case are they differences in *kind* so much as in *degree*.

First, teachers who take pleasure and pride in their classes seem to be able to make their students their own best salesmen. They apparently know how to sell their subjects as well as teach them. In the long run, this ability pays dividends in the support which language study receives from the student body and community. As someone has said, "Each child usually controls at least two votes in the PTA, not counting his possible influence as a wardheeler among the neighborhood gang." Indeed, our public relations often depend on the comment John makes at the supper table.

Secondly, teachers who feel secure and successful in their work seem to be able to make the most of differences in ability and interest among their students. Consequently they are not disturbed if at the end of a semester or more no two students emerge looking and talking exactly like their teacher. The emphasis, instead, is on enabling the gifted as well as the non-gifted to make as much progress as circumstances beyond their control allow. Perhaps the problem of individual differences could be reduced to more manageable proportions in many schools if especially interested and gifted pupils were promoted to a more advanced class.

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Almost every use of comprehensive achievement tests has shown that the highest ten per cent of one class equals or exceeds the average for the lower third of the class next above. Enrollments in third and fourth year courses might be larger than at present if guidance-placement tests were used with this fact in view.

Third, language departments that enjoy good morale direct their energies toward *attainable* goals. They avoid including so many minimum essentials at any semester level that the difficulty of achieving them with any degree of security or confidence leads to dissatisfaction and discouragement among pupils and teachers alike. In such cases, so much time has to be spent on checking the invoice and specifications that there is little opportunity to enjoy the article. Consciousness of shortcomings then undermines the satisfaction that usually accompanies a sense of achievement. For this reason minimum essentials should be set within the comfortable reach of all but the lowest five or ten per cent of the students as determined by their actual records over the years on departmental examinations. Naturally, this recommendation assumes that the readily attainable minimum will be supplemented and enriched by varied types of reading materials and activities that afford the students both practice and satisfaction in the use of the language as an educative means of communication. It also assumes that especially able students will be encouraged to advance as rapidly as possible on the basis of periodic guidance-placement tests and personal counseling. To them a self-instruction basic textbook with self-testing mastery-unit exercises is exceedingly useful. Its convenience to the teacher is perhaps too obvious for comment.

Fourth, schools which are distinctive in the respects mentioned avoid making the language seem more difficult or foreign than it really is. The emphasis instead is on making it as accessible as possible to the largest possible number of people. If necessary, the teachers speak of the "I-form" or the "we-form" instead of the "first person singular (or plural) nominative pronoun." After all, calling a simple word like *we* "the first person plural pronoun in the nominative case" is something like calling *beans* "*phaseolus vulgaris humilis*" for short. A knowledge of the technical labels is doubtless of great value in the academic world, but their use should not be made an obstacle to learning.

Equally important in making a language accessible is providing interested and qualified students the opportunity to maintain contact with the language throughout high school even where enrollments are too small to justify separate third or fourth year classes. Some schools with limited enrollments have solved this problem by conducting as

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many as three language sections simultaneously in the same room. Some teachers find this arrangement satisfactory; others do not.

A possibility less frequently explored is that of introducing an upper-division offering in World Literature, sponsored jointly by teachers of English and foreign languages, in which the students may read books in the original tongue or in translation and receive credit according to the language in which their reading is done. Inasmuch as World Literature has had the endorsement of the National Council of Teachers of English in nearly all its official publications, such offerings should not be difficult to introduce, especially since the teacher of Spanish is also a part-time teacher of English in many schools. As things now stand, too many graduates still find that the language which they took as freshmen or sophomores in high school has become too rusty for ready use in competition with older and more "college-wise" students who have completed a course only a short time ago.

Fifth, teachers who feel secure and successful in their work refrain from running any method or device into the ground. Moreover, they are careful to select basic texts which are in accord with their basic objectives. They know that the easiest way to turn the best method into the worst method is to carry it beyond the saturation point. After all, every method has a saturation point and a point of diminishing returns. If enthusiastic teachers are seldom at a loss for new ideas, it is because their repertory of technique is not limited to the literal use of a textbook.

Specifically, classes in which good morale prevails seem to provide pupils with frequent opportunities to use the language under guidance in sentences or dialogues of their own invention. It is essential to learn language by *using* it rather than by just *reciting it*. Granting that ready-made exercises and questions are indispensable, they should never replace the initiative of the instructor. The basic principle is to use such exercises only to the extent that they are needed in order to give a clear picture of the way language behaves under certain conditions. Beyond this point, the objective of active use and personal mastery requires the student to explore the language in sentences and questions of his own creation.

Recently a beginning class in Spanish completed a group of exercises dealing with the use of *ser* and *estar*. The results showed that many students were still confused or uncertain concerning the major differences between these verbs. The teacher therefore assigned another short group of exercises. This time the test yielded more satisfactory results. It was not assumed, however, that the pupils would thereafter

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use these verbs correctly in their own writing or speech. The teacher therefore added a further step. Turning to the group she said, "Now let's prove that we really know when to use *ser* and when to use *estar* by writing ten good questions of our own in Spanish, using only words that we already have in our heads. Then let's try the questions out on each other for practice in conversation. After all, we can't learn to speak or write Spanish just by working with other people's language. Ventriiloquists' dummies, you know, can never say anything except in the immediate presence of a master's voice."

In another beginning class pairs of pupils dramatized original dialogues. Although hardly twelve weeks had passed since the first lesson in pronunciation, many of the conversations ran from three to four minutes with seldom more than a slip or two in pronunciation. Grammatically, their productions were both correct and idiomatic. The pupils had simply borrowed appropriate phrases from short dialogues which they had previously committed to memory and then rewoven into a new context. Much of the pupils' satisfaction came from the opportunity to use the language on their own initiative. The moral is plain: Let us not carry ventriloquism in language beyond the point of diminishing returns.

If time is not available to permit much else, let us take another look at the course of study. It probably still repeats the age-long mistake of listing as "minimum" essentials the maximum that good students can "cover" for a grade of A. Is it not better to fill our intermediate and advanced classes with pupils who find things too easy, rather than to have too few pupils left to fill them at all?

Finally, teachers who seem to be enthusiastic about the worthwhileness of their work sharpen the skills in reading, writing, and speaking on content and activities that add something to the students' social and mental maturity—something beyond the fact that Spain and the Americas have different ways from our own for saying the same things. The fact is that language learned apart from a knowledge of the people who speak it in our day is only half safe in learning to live with them in a world now so small that hardly anything today is foreign. We must know people well enough to speak to—not just to talk about. As teachers of languages, therefore, let us make certain that after a year or two our students know more about the people than that they have "indefinite futures" because of their "indefinite antecedents," or that even the women have *masculine* feet!

The unusual popularity of French in one community is, I believe, attributable to the fact that the language is practiced in class largely

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in terms of travelogues, informative commentaries on the how and why of things, skits, historical playlets, songs, poems, and the like. With only a little extra polishing, all are suitable for presentation to a school assembly, to a meeting of the PTA, or to an elementary school class that has embarked upon the study of children in French-speaking lands. Surely content that has little significance or appeal to anybody outside the class will not long have much holding power over anyone within it.

Without supplying more than a new set of words for a student's current knowledge, ignorance, or biases, language teaching cannot make its full contribution to the liberal arts and humanities of which it has traditionally been a part. In practice this means taking our social and cultural aims seriously enough to bring them out of the limbo of the ultimate into the range of the immediate through the kind of materials and activities used as means for practicing the language.

In the light of today's world, no idealism here is too visionary for a profession whose clients are the next generation. In the long run "it is the ideals by which we live that become the things that live because of us," and through them we leave our signature on the little fleck of dust called the earth.

University of Illinois

Linguistics, not Grammar, in Foreign Language Teaching

It was Shakespeare, I believe, who said that a rose by any other name would smell as sweet. It has been the modern advertising copyman, however, who has discovered that Shakespeare was only talking about the potential of roses and not about man. Today no manufacturer would dare face the economic disaster which would result from labeling a perfume "rose." The manufacturer knows that he can multiply his sales by changing labels and that the rose sells better if it is called *Forbidden, Danger, Pursuit, Bikini . . . Naked Rose*.

This is the magic of the word which distorts reality and turns it into a human response with the result that the referent is no longer an objective entity, but an emotional reaction in the minds of people. Such a phenomenon is as old as language itself, but it is not one which should characterize professional thinking about foreign language teaching. Nevertheless, today the word "grammar," because of this curious and primitive process of hypostatization, has come into disfavor among the advocates of progressive education. Actually the mark or badge of progressiveness in the modern language teacher is this special reaction, not to the realities of language as a system of communication, but to the word "grammar." "Let us," says the progressive teacher, "be practical. We must teach our students the living language. We must teach them how to talk, how to understand, how to read, instead of teaching them a lot of grammar rules." Reduced to its essence, this attitude can be readily converted into a slogan which might well be expressed by "Less Grammar and More Language."

I sympathize with this point of view. Too many of our students have been grammared to death by teachers whose scant knowledge of linguistics and of the language they are teaching has forced them to take refuge in the exclusive teaching of grammar rules. At the same time, as a professional educator and linguist, I am seriously disturbed by the practical class-room consequences which result from the construction of a teaching program predicated on a purely negative and, unfortunately, emotional response to a label whose referent is a hypostatization.

This speech was presented to the Research Council of the Modern Language Association of Southern California, October, 1953, Bell, California.

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That many teachers and most students respond negatively to a word, and not to any reality, can readily be demonstrated by the fact that a very large number of both are quite incapable of describing the actual referent of either the word "grammar," which they dislike, or the word "language," which they profess to like. If we ask "What is grammar?" they usually respond, "Grammar is a lot of rules," and they are likely to add, "We don't want rules, we want the language." One could, now, press for a more precise definition of the word "rule," but let us ask instead for a description of this entity called language. What is a language?

To obtain an answer to this question from students and teachers representative of the "less grammar and more language" school of thought, I recently conducted the following experiment with my class in teaching methodology, a group of 19 students (13 graduates and 6 seniors, 5 of whom have had teaching experience). First, to classify them, I asked them which one of the following statements expressed their point of view: (1) I favor teaching Spanish by means of grammar rules, (2) I am in favor of teaching more language and less grammar. 16 students favored more language and less grammar; only 2 favored teaching by means of grammar rules; 1 couldn't make up her mind. Second, I then gave them 15 minutes in which to write a clear and precise definition of what is meant by "language" as expressed in the phrase "the Spanish language," that is, the subject they expect to teach.

I shall quote some examples of what language was said to be:

- (1) "Spanish is all the people who have used it, who are now using it and who will use it."
- (2) "The Spanish language is the means of active communication of the peoples of Latin America and Spain."
- (3) "The sum total of portions of languages used by the various invaders of the Peninsula that have been assimilated so as to convey meaning and furnish a means for communication."
- (4) "Specific form of regional communication between a receptor and a giver as distinguished from other provincial communications."
- (5) "The Spanish language is a tool by which we communicate in Spanish."
- (6) "The Spanish language is an articulated set of thought patterns derived largely from the Vulgar Latin."

It seems unnecessary, at this juncture, to belabor the obvious. My

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students had no useful, pedagogical conception of what a language is. Their definitions of language, when they are not totally meaningless, concentrate upon the insignificant, the inconsequential, and the obvious. That language is a means, a form, a tool, a vehicle of communication is, of course, undeniable, but so is the radio, television, the telegraph, a mathematical equation, a smoke signal, or a Congo drum. The basic difficulty of these students, and, in my opinion, of large segments of the language profession, stems from the fact that they are thinking almost exclusively in terms of labels whose referents are abstractions which can be related to actual reality only with great difficulty. When they reject one abstraction, grammar, and embrace another abstraction, language, they arrive at no practical solution of their pedagogical problems and, as a result, they are driven inexorably to the only solution available, the Mother Method of instruction in which the ignorant and the illiterate are usually quite as successful as the college graduate.

I should like, now, to analyze the major causes and processes of such pedagogical disintegration and to suggest some means for remedying the situation.

Let us begin, first, with a scientific definition of a language. *A language is the total of all sounds and their graphic equivalents and of all their potential linear combinations forming the past, present, and future means of communication among the members of a single community, nation, or people.* Note, now, that this definition, even though it is reasonably scientific, is not descriptive of any actual reality. Nor can it be made descriptive of any reality simply by substituting for "a language" a phrase like "the Spanish language." There are two critical elements in this definition which remove language from the realm of actual reality and automatically convert it into an abstraction, a purely theoretical concept. The first is time. Neither the past nor the potential future can be included in the present, the only moment in time at which the existence of a reality can be established. The definition, obviously, embraces a whole continuum, an entity which can only be dealt with abstractly.

The second disturbing factor is the concept of totality, "all sounds, etc." A total which must inevitably be distributed throughout time and space cannot be perceived as a reality. We arrive at the concept by inference and deduction and end up, inescapably, with an abstraction. In short, then, in terms of the definition of language which I have just given, no one ever speaks a language and no one, most certainly, ever teaches a language. Consequently, until we can define the

difference between this abstract concept of language and what we actually teach, we cannot discuss intelligently either our methods or our goals.

Granted, now, that any language exists only as an abstract concept, we have a frame of reference which should give us a much better definition of grammar and, I believe, the key to the current generalized objection to grammar. The classical grammarian does not study man talking, that is, a specific individual uttering a specific, linear combination of meaningful sounds. The grammarian is a taxonomist whose prime interest is systematization, categorization, classification. He is, inevitably, an elementalist who searches for the smallest, indivisible entity as the basis for classification and, simultaneously, a universalist, who attempts to establish a system of classification which is all-inclusive. Thus, for example, the grammarian as a phonetician or phonemecist breaks sound into its component elements and immediately attempts to discover how many items are to be found in each category in *the* language. Or, as a morphologist, he searches for the smallest meaningful combinations of sounds and, again, attempts to discover how many such combinations there are in *the* language. When he gets through, he has discovered, described, named, and categorized all the mechanical features of the language—the whole alphabet, all the phonemes, all morphological items, etc., etc. His data are the reality described in the scientific definition of a language; that is, our scientific concept of the language is, in effect, the sum of what the grammarian has discovered. Or, to put it another way, when our progressive teachers say that a language is a system of communication, the referent of *system* is the end-product of the grammarian's research. *Grammar* seems to sound better when labeled *language* or a *system of communication*.

The confused semantics and the lack of logic behind the contemporary objections to grammar are certainly to be deplored and might well be taken as a means of bolstering the cause of grammar. This would be unwise. There exist substantial grounds for an unfavorable attitude toward the grammar method of teaching foreign languages. It is quite obvious, however, that the anti-grammarians have only a vague and intuitive knowledge of these grounds, that their objections are not the result of a positive program based on scientific knowledge, but the product of a negative attitude toward something they really do not understand, and, lastly, that their solution—a retreat to the Mother Method of instruction—is, in fact, their admission that they are incapable of resolving pedagogical problems by scientific procedures.

It is axiomatic among scientists that man's understanding of the

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world has improved not so much as the result of the accumulation of data, but because stubborn problems have been resolved by reformulations of known facts, by grasping, so to speak, the other end of the stick. A first step in such a reformulation of our pedagogical problem in foreign language teaching should be a clear definition of what we are actually attempting to teach. Whatever this is, it is quite obviously not a set of abstractions—not the language, nor the grammar of the language, nor a system of communication. The reason for this is not hard to find. It can be most easily expounded, however, by means of a simple analogy.

The telegraph, like language, is a system of communication. The telegraph company, in the role of pedagogue, has, however, two very distinct educational programs: in one department it teaches some of its staff the whole system, all the details, all the circuits and how and why they work—these people become its communications engineers. In a quite different department the company trains telegraphers or key operators how to use the physical system to send communications, that is, actual information.

There are three critical factors determining the success or failure of the company's training programs: (1) it must know whether it is training engineers or telegraphers; (2) it must have a detailed description of the operational activities of both the engineer and the telegrapher so that (3) it will know precisely what knowledge and skills are absolutely essential to carry on these different activities with dispatch and maximum efficiency.

Granted, now, that it is the telegrapher, not the engineer, who most resembles our average foreign language student, the first step in our reformulation of the language teaching problem should be a precise description of the operational activities of an actual person, a real telegrapher, on the job. In other words, if we want to establish a training program for telegraphers, we need to focus our attention first on what actual telegraphers do. Our first question, then, is "What does a telegrapher do?" Our second question is "How does he do it?" and our third is "What does he have to know in order to carry on efficiently?" When we have found the answers to these questions we have a set of operational instructions, a manual of operation, which every telegrapher must follow in order to do his job properly. In such a manual of operations we have an absolute minimum which every instructor must teach and which every student telegrapher must learn and about which there can be no debate.

Reduced, now, to its simplest terms, what I am proposing as a

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substitute for the traditional grammarian's approach to language is a linguistic approach to communication. This is not, I assure you, the rose by some other name.

The prime point of departure in such a formulation of the problem is not language, nor grammar, nor the system of communication; it is always the specific information, the actual telegram, so to speak, being handed to the telegrapher. Once we are sure of precisely what the information is, our first job is to select the proper routine and, then, to follow the operational instructions which result in the actual sending of the message.

In any real-life situation this is not a simple task because there are frequently six major factors involved in the complex which we shall call a specific act of communication. They are:

- (1) the actual information to be communicated, the specific message
- (2) the medium of communication to be used—sound, writing, gestures, signals, etc.
- (3) the place, that is, the physical and social environment
- (4) the time, both clock and calendar
- (5) the actual communicator and communicatee and their immediate inter-relationship in terms of age, training, social background, the distance between them in space, etc.
- (6) what the specific persons involved are doing at the moment of communication.

It is quite obvious that the formulation of our teaching problem in terms of any actual act of communicating specific information reveals an operational pattern which cannot be explained or taught in terms of either the mechanics or the grammar of any language. Five of the factors involved in actual communication are always extra-lingual and even the sixth, the medium of communication, may be a non-language device, a gesture, a signal, a whistle, etc. Language, in short, is only one element of the complex.

I should like, now, to sharpen the contrast between the grammatical approach to language study and the linguistic approach to communication by discussing in detail two specific problems.

One of the major problems in teaching Spanish is the question of adjectives. The grammarians approach this specific problem by asking "*What kind of adjectives precede and what kind of adjectives follow*

the noun?" At the very outset, then, the grammarian commits himself to the proposition that a classification of adjectives will provide the answer to the problem of position. This classification, moreover, is usually done in terms of what is called function and in most of our elementary textbooks this procedure produces two kinds of adjectives: limiting adjectives and descriptive adjectives. An inspection of any large segment of actual Spanish reveals that nearly all limiting adjectives precede the noun and that descriptive adjectives, to quote a very successful text, "usually follow the noun." These statements or rules are statements of statistical probabilities.

Granted, now, that this information is correct, and in this case it is grammatically accurate, what precisely are our teaching problems? We must begin with the definition of an abstract concept, namely, that part of speech called *adjective*. We move, in our second step, to a somewhat lower order of abstraction, that is, the division of all adjectives into the two categories of limiting and descriptive. We must now explain the concept expressed by the words "limiting" and "descriptive," by analogy, of course, with other abstract concepts, and with this accomplished, we proceed to drill our students in the recognition of the actual words included in these two categories. When this is finished we inform them that nearly all limiting adjectives precede the noun and that descriptive adjectives usually follow the noun, and we demand, of course, that each specific adjective be placed in accordance with these principles.

One should note, now, three extremely significant facts. First, there is not the slightest suggestion in all this exposition that position may be a linguistic device for the communication of information. Second, the grammarian's urge to universality forces us to begin, not with any actual reality, but with the most inclusive and highest level abstraction possible, that is, the adjective, and, third, we never descend the ladder of abstraction far enough to get an answer to that critical and logical question, "Does this particular adjective in this specific communication precede or follow the noun?" After all this effort our students cannot really find out whether they should say "tu esposa linda," which the rule suggests, or "tu linda esposa," which is what every native actually says. The statistical generalizations expressed by such grammatical rules may be significant data to the communications engineer but they provide the poor telegrapher with no instructions on how to solve his immediate problems. This, I submit, is why our students hate grammar.

Let us, now, grasp the other end of the stick and approach the problem of adjective position from the point of view of reality, the infor-

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mation contained in an actual communication. Suppose, for example, our students wish to talk about the inhabitants of Texas, that is, the Texans, and, suppose, in addition, they wish to talk about that legend that *all* Texans are tall. We have now established that there are three distinct points of information to be contained in the communication: (1) what is to be talked about, the Texans, (2) what is to be said about them, to be expressed by "tall," and (3) how many Texans are supposed to exhibit this characteristic, in this case, all of them. In short, the information deals with a thing, a characteristic, and a notion of number or quantity.

Only at this point, and no sooner, can we have our students consult the manual of operations for instructions on how to send this message in Spanish. These instructions will read like this: *the thing and the characteristic are expressed by actual words, as in English. The number of things having the characteristic is indicated by the position of the word expressing the characteristic. If you wish to say that all of the things being talked about have the same characteristic, put the characterizing word immediately in front of the name of the thing; if you wish to say that some of the things have this characteristic, put the characterizing word immediately after the name of the thing.*

The student, at this juncture, rechecks his information, which was supposed to concern *all* Texans and, with only two alternatives to choose from should arrive unerringly at the proper construction of his message, that is, "los altos tejanos."

There are, in this approach to the problem, only two possible sources of error: (1) either the student doesn't know what information he wants in his message, in short, he doesn't know what he is talking about, or (2) he is incapable of following simple instructions.

Most students, if they stay with the study of Spanish, eventually manage to learn where to put adjectives, and I should like, as a consequence, to analyze another problem which not only confuses all graduate students, but also a rather large number of experienced teachers. I am talking about the use of what our texts, in grammatical terminology, call the Preterite and Imperfect tenses.

Let us suppose, in order to establish the information of a model communication, that my electric refrigerator suddenly develops motor trouble and begins to make a lot of noise. Let us also suppose that this happens while we are having dinner. I call in an electrical repairman and he arrives after an hour has elapsed. The motor is still making the noise and he asks me, "When did it begin to do this?" I answer,

"I heard the noise when we were eating dinner."

I am concerned, now, with the information contained in this last sentence and how this information can be communicated in Spanish. First, you will note, that I am talking about a noise; second, that I am reporting upon my first awareness of this noise and, in addition, my manner of perception; third, I am attempting to give the approximate time of the initiation of perception by declaring that this event was simultaneous with some portion of the act of eating dinner, and, fourth, by this device, I am trying to answer the electrician's question of "When?" In condensed form, then, my information is as follows:

- (1) noise
- (2) manner of perception—hearing
- (3) time of initiation of perception which is established by the limits of another action, namely, eating dinner.

Now, then, let's take a good look at these facts. Notice, first, that the act of eating dinner cannot possibly serve as a useful clock unless that act has been completed some time prior to the moment in which I make the statement. Notice, also, that the noise is still there in actual reality and that the act of perception has not, as a consequence, been terminated. I am still hearing the noise.

Let us, now, see if we can solve this problem by the grammarian's rules. The same text, which I quoted earlier, states: "The preterite tense is usually used to express an action completed in the past." The word "usually," of course, gets us off at once to a bad start because we have no way of knowing whether this situation is usual or abnormal. Instructions on how to determine this are not given. Let us assume, however, since we have no other choice, that our situation is normal. Now, the act of hearing, as just pointed out, is still in progress but the act of eating dinner was completed in the past. It had to be in order to be of any use to us in the communication. It is, then, a first-rate candidate for the preterite tense. But, before we jump at this, we should check the rule on the use of the imperfect. Our text states: "The imperfect is used to describe the 'stage-setting' or the scene of events." Back we go, now, to our original information. Neither noise, nor perception, nor a statement about time can be equated with a "stage-setting" or a "scene." Where do we go from here? The answer is simple: we go join the ranks of grammar haters.

It is clear, of course, that what we need in order to solve this problem is a set of operational instructions which will deal with the specific

information in our communication. I would write these instructions as follows: *Every action or event has a beginning, a middle, and an end. If you wish to say that a specific act either began or ended at some point of time prior to the moment in which you are speaking, use the Preterite. If you mean to say that neither the beginning nor the end of the act, only its middle, coincides with that point in time, use the Imperfect.*

We can now do something with our original information. First, we want to report the initiation, the beginning, of the act of perceiving the noise. This takes the Preterite. Second, we *do not* want to report that the beginning of this act was simultaneous with either the beginning or the end of eating dinner; it happened during the middle of eating dinner. In other words, the middle of the act of eating dinner coincides with the point in time about which we are talking. This, then, takes the Imperfect. Our sentence, then, goes as follows: *Oí el ruido cuando cenábamos.*

It seems appropriate at this juncture, by way of conclusion, to stress some of the virtues of the linguistic approach to communication. First, throughout any analysis we are concerned only with actual realities. In the first example, with things, their characteristics, their number, and the order of words. In the second example with a thing, action, the parts of an action, and time. Second, as a result of this, we can, if necessary, avoid all technical vocabulary and the need to define abstractions. Third, the memory work is reduced to the simple recognition of alternatives. Fourth, we have taught the student not a mechanical solution of the problem but, in reality, the actual processes followed intuitively by the native. We actually teach him that elusive thing called the native's *Sprachgefühl*, and, lastly, we have placed ourselves, as teachers, in the enviable position where we can dismiss all objections to learning instructions as actual objections to learning how to send messages in Spanish. In short, the student who does not want to know *what* he is talking about and *how* it is said just doesn't want to learn the language at all.

University of California, Los Angeles

The Language Laboratory in Southern California

This study of the status of the language laboratory in Southern California was made for the Audio-Visual Committee of the Research Council of the Modern Language Association of Southern California so that all school personnel in this area might be informed of recent trends in the use of this new technique in the teaching of foreign languages. Three types of installations are discussed: first, the simplest equipment; second, the listening room shared by several departments, and third, the language laboratory used exclusively by the language department.¹ This report also includes a discussion of methods of preparing records, techniques for using recorded material, and a tentative evaluation of the language laboratory.

The language laboratory at Los Angeles City College consists of three phonographs placed on tables in the back of a large classroom. Each phonograph is equipped with a junction box which accommodates six headphones. All three phonographs are triple-speed machines, two of them costing \$25 each wholesale and the third \$40. The headphones cost \$1.50 each. This installation serves to illustrate at what small expense a usable listening room can be set up.² Many schools feel that they cannot afford to provide a separate room with additional equipment for a language laboratory, but it would seem that any school could make arrangements as simple as the above considering the values of language achievement thus made possible. At Los Angeles the records that go with Kenneth Leslie's *Spanish for Conversation*³ are used, as well as the Funk and Wagnalls' German records with accompanying booklets. Records for Latin and French classes are prepared by the instructors. The students can use the listening room for individual

¹The following persons have generously supplied the information regarding the language laboratories at their own schools: Mr. Stanford Miller of Los Angeles City College, Dorothy M. Kincell of Riverside College, Mrs. Nadia Wilson of Los Angeles City College Evening Division (reported for the University of Southern California), Miss Dorathea Frahm of San Bernardino Valley College, Mr. W. R. Cope of Santa Monica City College, Miss Harriett Genung and Dr. Joseph Landry of Mt. San Antonio College, Mr. Charles N. Butt of Occidental College, and Miss Kathleen D. Loly of Pasadena City College.

²Plans are under way at Los Angeles City College for the expansion of these facilities, and additional equipment, to include a record cutter, tape recorders, etc., is now on order.

³Ginn and Company.

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practice six hours each day, for even if a class is in session the headphones provide isolation. Instructors also use the headphones for class work: for example, to provide a model after which the class may repeat in unison or to allow some students to listen while others are engaged in finishing tests or other written work. Although the equipment is simple and the location is far from perfect, the teachers at Los Angeles City College are making good use of it until a central listening room for the college can be obtained.

The Foreign Language Laboratory at Riverside College is a small room about fifteen feet square. It is equipped with two turntables mounted in one long table. Twenty students may be accommodated at earphones. The total cost was only about \$175.00. Each student in Spanish is required to spend one period each week in the laboratory. French students hear the records in class. Spanish-American students are chosen, if possible, for laboratory assistants. The materials used consist of conversational dialogues correlated with the basic text and exercises for listening, pronunciation, and vocabulary drill. In Spanish 3 and 4 recorded excerpts from literary works are used. Tape recordings may be made in the silent room at the Visual Education Department in the Administration Building.

The language laboratory at the University of Southern California is a small listening room equipped with a Webster Chicago wire recorder, a Soundmirror tape recorder, a record cutter, a phonograph, and a variety of records. Facilities for listening to recordings are also provided by the Music Library. The listening room is used by the Spanish and French departments; the German and Italian departments are awaiting more equipment so that they too may set up their schedules. First year students in Spanish receive ear training based on the text, *Intensive Spanish* by Dwight L. Bolinger.⁴ For each chapter a set of twenty questions based on the reading selection has been recorded. This is required listening for the students, who are then tested by means of true-false questions. First and second year students must spend one half hour per week in the listening room under the guidance of a trained assistant; they read aloud, take dictation, listen to records, and hear their own voices recorded on tape. The French department makes use of the language laboratory in a more informal manner. The students come in by prearrangement with the assistant in charge. They have at their disposal a variety of commercially produced records, musical or educational, and recordings made by members of the department to fill special needs: dictation, phonetic drill on vowel sounds, and

⁴Russell Press, Philadelphia.

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sentences to be repeated. The students also receive help in their pronunciation, and can make records of their own voices on discs.

The listening room at San Bernardino Valley College was designed as a teaching device in the field of music appreciation, but the Division of Foreign Languages uses it much more than the Music Department. The listening room is located in the center of the campus so that the various groups concerned may make the best use of it. The equipment consists of two tape recorders, a one-minute Caltrone Wire Recorder, and three turntables which are wired in circuits to the 38 student positions. As many as five different groups can be served simultaneously through the use of headphones. San Bernardino has one of the largest listening rooms, containing about 600 square feet of floor space, which cost approximately \$14.40 per square foot. The headphones and wiring were given to the college as surplus property. The tables and wiring installations were developed by students of radio and television. If one had to pay for the equipment, material, and labor for installation, the cost would probably amount to about \$20,000.00. It is interesting to note in connection with this listening room and the ones at Santa Monica City College and Pasadena City College that by having the electronics students design and install the equipment, valuable experience was derived as well as a considerable saving in money. At San Bernardino an adult operator has charge of the room. Commercial records based on the textbooks are not used; instead, they have a well-developed program in which French, German, and Spanish-speaking people of the community, foreign students, and members of the faculty make tapes and records. These tapes follow the lessons in the text, and are spaced so that the student may repeat what he hears. San Bernardino was one of the pioneers in the use of the laboratory in teaching foreign languages and has set a fine example for the establishment of others in this area.

The language laboratories at Santa Monica City College, Mt. San Antonio College, Occidental College, and Pasadena City College are used only by language students.⁵ The listening room at Santa Monica is located between two of the language classrooms and is connected to one by a sound-proofed control window. The low estimated cost of \$1300 was achieved by having the equipment installed by the technology department. It is equipped with a disc recorder, two turntables,

⁵As this report is being concluded, the new campus of the University of California at Riverside is completing its plans for opening. One of the features will be a language listening room with 18 listening posts and recordings in five different languages. It seems a significant indication of the importance of language laboratories that this installation should be included in the plans for this newest branch of the State University.

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and two tape recorders. Each of the 18 earphones may be plugged into any of four jacks and thus be connected with any one of the four transcription machines. In addition, each machine may be connected, by means of selector switches, to a loudspeaker in the listening room, or to speakers in either or both of the two contiguous classrooms. Any combination of outlets may be used simultaneously with any or all of the machines. One can also transcribe directly from tape to disc, disc to disc, or tape to tape. All of these possibilities illustrate the fact that the arrangement of a listening room should be flexible in order that the equipment may be used to full advantage. The language teachers at Santa Monica, with the assistance of foreign students, have recorded all the lessons in the elementary language texts. Commercial records are used wherever available. A student assistant is hired for ten hours per week and all the teachers can operate the equipment. Each first year student is required to spend at least two hours per month in the listening room; otherwise, attendance is optional. Records of student attendance are kept in a card file by the student technician. The technicians also duplicate the recordings for individual students who have been ill, or who are having difficulty with pronunciation or even the memorization of vocabulary or verb forms. The teachers have found that the feature of having connections to classrooms for both transcriptions and recording is valuable in classroom work, not only for regular lessons, but for the playing of music, and recording of skits and other classroom activities.

Mt. San Antonio College was one of the first in this area to have a listening room. They now have four, two of which have been specifically equipped and located between classrooms used for language arts. Each room contains 360 square feet of floor space and is equipped with thirty listening cubicles, acoustically treated. Each listening post has one headset and one microphone whereby each student's voice may be individually recorded. The console, designed by Mr. Wesley Lewis of the Mt. San Antonio College Communications Center, was manufactured by Mattson-Cowley of Pasadena. There are two playback amplifier systems, one recording amplifier system, one AM-FM radio, two disc systems, two tape systems, one master microphone, and two monitor headsets for each listening room. In addition to the speaker located in the laboratory, there is a speaker in each of the adjoining classrooms, over which programs may be played from the main console. Each of the phonograph units is a portable cabinet on wheels. This permits the playing of discs in a classroom while the listening room is being used. Recording may be done from a master microphone or from the radio onto either tape machine, or from any of the thirty

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individual student microphones. Scheduling of rooms and supervision of equipment is under the jurisdiction of the Audio-Visual program controlled by the Library. Each foreign language instructor operates the equipment and records his own tapes for classroom use. Professional recording of a permanent nature is done by the Communications Center of the college.

The language laboratory at Occidental College is housed in the Library next to the office of the Modern Language Department. When first organized it consisted of three tables, each containing two listening posts. Two sets of headphones could be plugged into each listening post. This installation was soon found to be inadequate and sixteen additional booths were built. The new booths have no turntables, but do contain separate amplifiers, a set of headphones, and a microphone with its own volume control. All of the equipment except the six turntables and their amplifiers was obtained from surplus sources and hence cost very little. Four of the new booths are fed from each of the original master booths which contain the three-speed turntables. In order that all persons listening may hear the same material, a multiple switching arrangement has been worked out from the master booths. The microphone in each booth is connected to its own amplifier by a separate circuit and is fed back into the headset of that station. This makes it possible for the student to listen to spaced, recorded material and by repeating the words or expressions into the microphone he can hear a very good comparison of his own pronunciation with that heard on the record. At present, no student operators are used, although this is part of future plans. The recordings are kept in the nearby reserve room of the Library and are checked out to the student for not more than an hour at a time. Sign-out cards in the reserve room thereby provide a check on student use. Listening has been recommended in each of the languages taught for which records have been made. It has not been made compulsory, however, because of the lack of student operators. The records which have been cut in French and Spanish have been recorded by faculty members and foreign students. The purpose of this is to have a variety of voices so that a student's pronunciation or comprehension of the language will not be based upon the voice of one instructor alone.

The language laboratory at Pasadena City College was created by installing the necessary equipment in the largest language classroom. This room adjoins the Language Office with a connecting door which facilitates supervision. The electronics class of the college designed and installed the console equipment and the cabinet class built the console itself. The console contains five turntables that are linked to

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the five regular circuits which can accommodate a total of 43 students. The operator can direct any of the five programs to any of the circuits and can monitor them. When additional flexibility is desired, four extra Newcomb phonographs are plugged in so that nine different programs may be in progress at the same time. This is necessary on the three days of the week reserved for individual use. Two days of the week are reserved for class use. Each teacher brings his classes into the laboratory on an average of two or three times a month for half an hour. An additional twenty or twenty-five minutes per week is assigned as part of the class homework. In the laboratory is a sound-proof booth in which tape recordings may be made. Another tape recorder and a disc cutter are used in a separate room. Faculty time is allotted by the school for general supervision and to cut records. The trained student laboratory assistants, who run the equipment, get the records out and sign slips indicating the class, teacher, material listened to, and time spent in the laboratory, are paid by the hour. Class operators, who work only for their own classes, are given service points. If they are citizens, native speakers are paid for their time to make recordings. Although Pasadena uses all available commercial recordings that are related to the texts, such as the Jarrett, *El Camino Real* and Leslie, *Spanish for Conversation* series, it has been necessary to prepare most of the records. Native speakers record on tape the reading selections, vocabulary, and questions of the texts. These selections are then cut permanently on discs and the tapes are saved in case the record wears out later or if a duplicate record is desired.

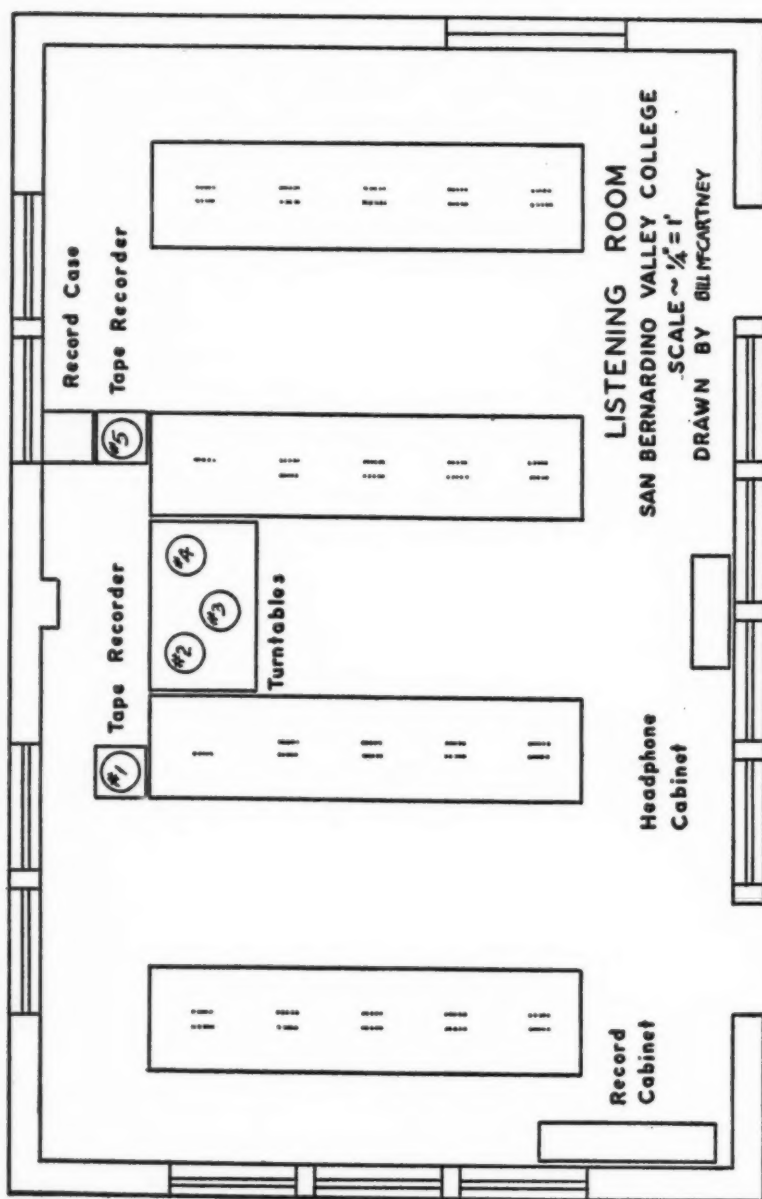
Although the physical plant of the language laboratories varies greatly, it is interesting to note that many of the methods and techniques employed are common to all. The records and tapes prepared by the language teachers are usually made up of pronunciation exercises, vocabularies, and reading selections taken from the texts, with pauses for the student to repeat what he hears. At Santa Monica and San Bernardino the French teachers have modified the usual recording system somewhat. They try to have two speakers for each selection recorded, preferably a man and a woman. Each speaker says a word or phrase taken from the text and then pauses for the student to repeat. At Occidental, the speaker says each word or expression twice with a space left in between for the student to repeat what he hears into the microphone in front of him. He thus hears the speaker's voice, his own imitation, and then the speaker again. At San Bernardino the student listens to the space records and then can practice on the Caltrone wire recorder so that he hears his own pronunciation. At Mt. San Antonio and Pasadena the student can listen to the prepared

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material and during the pauses repeat what he hears into a microphone in front of him. A tape recorder takes down both the original passage and what the student has said in the pauses. Then the student plays back the tape and compares his own work with the original. A permanent disc recording can be made if desired. This technique may also be used for a whole class, each student taking a turn.

The material prepared for the laboratory can be used in many ways. The student may prepare the selection first and then hear it read by a skilled native speaker or he may listen to the recording first. Passages can be prepared for the laboratory so that enough time is allowed for the student to take the material down as dictation, or the teacher may give dictation later on material which the class has heard in the laboratory. Advanced students can even take dictation from material twice if the space between selections is too long. Where answers to questions are memorized in the foreign language, the student can give the answer required in the pause left after each question. Comprehension exercises may be recorded from familiar material or from selections of an equivalent difficulty. These are read at a normal speed with no pauses and then the students answer prepared questions in writing. The set of records that accompanies *El Camino Real* uses this technique in its plateau readings. This method can be used for practice or it can be made the basis for an examination grade. Other commercial records, such as the Linguaphone records for French, German, and Spanish and the two Holt series, "Getting Around in French" and "Getting Around in Spanish," are practical because the printed text is available. Some popular records are also issued with printed texts, for example, the "Spanish Through Music" album.

New techniques are constantly being developed in the various language laboratories. Santa Monica has developed a fine program of duplicating the recorded selections on the students' own discs. This permits them to listen to the material at their own convenience and as frequently as they desire. At Mt. San Antonio commercial recordings of popular songs, poetry, dramatic readings, and opera are used in the laboratory. Each student is provided with a copy of the script, which has been studied beforehand. The operas *Carmen* and *Faust* are heard in their entirety in the third semester, the librettos having first been studied intensively as class reading. Pasadena makes use of mimeographed texts to such records as the album of *Carmen* and some of the popular records of Jacqueline François, Edith Piaf, Henri Salvador, and Charles Trenet. Students are not permitted to listen to music without following the text. Some students learn the popular



NOTE~ Each headphone position in the room is wired in parallel with the respective position shown. Twisted pairs of annunciator wire must be used to eliminate cross-talk.

NOTE~ A small resistor approximately equal to the resistance of the headphones should be placed across each jack. When the phone plug is inserted this resistance should be removed. This is required to keep a constant total load impedance of about eight ohms.

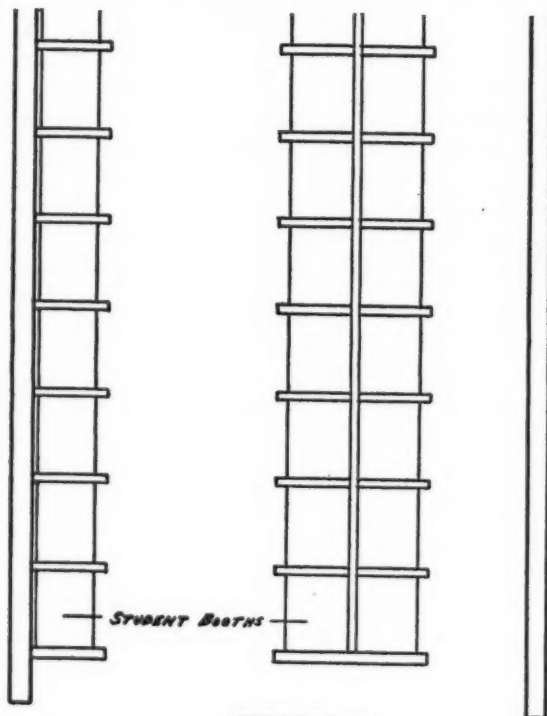
ZELL O. RUST

songs and enjoy singing with the record. These songs add interest and variety to the laboratory work if they are used carefully. In the Spanish conversation class at the University of Southern California, the textbook has been replaced by a set of records pressed by the Audio-Visual Department from tapes recorded in Mexico by *La Voz del Hogar*. This is a welfare organization which broadcasts dramatic programs on domestic problems. These are especially useful because there is a variety of speakers in each playlet. Every student has his own copy of the "textbook," consisting of two long-playing records so that he can practice at home.

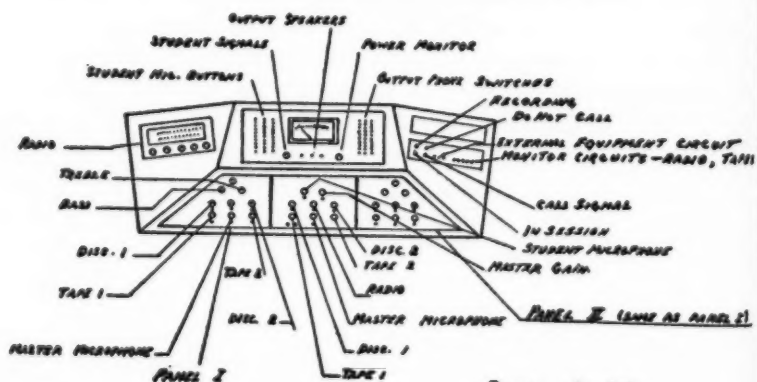
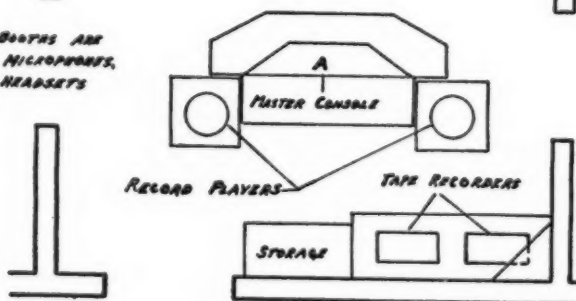
Some of the techniques and observations merit special mention. For instance, at Los Angeles City College, Mr. Miller, instructor of Latin, put sentences on the records which did not occur in the written text. The students had to copy these down, which in itself is good experience. Some of these sentences were then put on every test. This technique illustrates the fact that the work in the laboratory must be closely related to the work in the classroom so that the students feel that it is an integral part of the course work. At the University of Southern California language laboratory techniques play an important part in the program of the Spanish department. Entering students are given a classification examination, in which their aural comprehension is tested by means of listening to records. In addition to the laboratory work already described, their oral progress is tested every five weeks by a recorded examination: they write a dictation, answer in English questions put in Spanish, and must detect mispronounced words in a pronunciation exercise. At Mt. San Antonio and elsewhere periodic oral tests are recorded on tape. The advantage of these is that they can be graded at the instructor's convenience and may be replayed as often as necessary. At Santa Monica and San Bernardino the student translates what he hears as an oral test. The same procedure can be used as a class drill by having the students take turns in answering. San Bernardino goes further with this aural comprehension technique. The student is required to translate orally and then write what he hears. These papers are corrected and returned to the student. Next the student expands this material into a longer conversation or composition to include material he has learned in his grammar, reader, or other class work. These papers are corrected, graded as weekly compositions, and returned to the students. The student frequently wishes to listen to his composition or conversation read by himself and one or more members of the class chosen by him.

This survey has revealed the following special benefits derived from laboratory techniques that are difficult to obtain by any other method.

THE SAN ANTONIO COLLEGE
LANGUAGE LAB
SCALE 1/2" = 1'-0"



NOTE: STUDENT BOOTHS ARE
EQUIPPED WITH MICROPHONES,
AND LISTENING HEADSETS



DETAIL OF 'A'

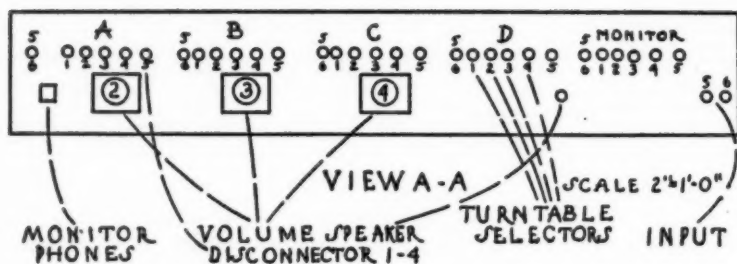
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The language laboratory is highly useful to beginning students because they can hear the important sounds, words, and phrases pronounced by natives as often as they like. This is especially valuable if they enter late or are absent from class. In addition, the records are made by different native speakers at varying rates of speed so that the student hears several variations of speech and not just the pronunciation of his teacher. The speed of the records must be coordinated with the class. The student must repeat aloud the material that he is hearing. Thus he is conscious of his own errors and can continually try to improve his speech. It should be emphasized that there must be active participation on the part of each student; mere passive listening will not bring the desired results. Experience indicates that most value accrues from using record materials based on the text used in class because it is familiar to the student. These records should be made with pauses after each sentence or phrase so that the student may repeat aloud during the interval. Records may be prepared so that the reading selection is first read with pauses, then without pauses and at normal speed. Other materials not based on the text add interest and broaden the course, but they cannot replace this basic textual material.

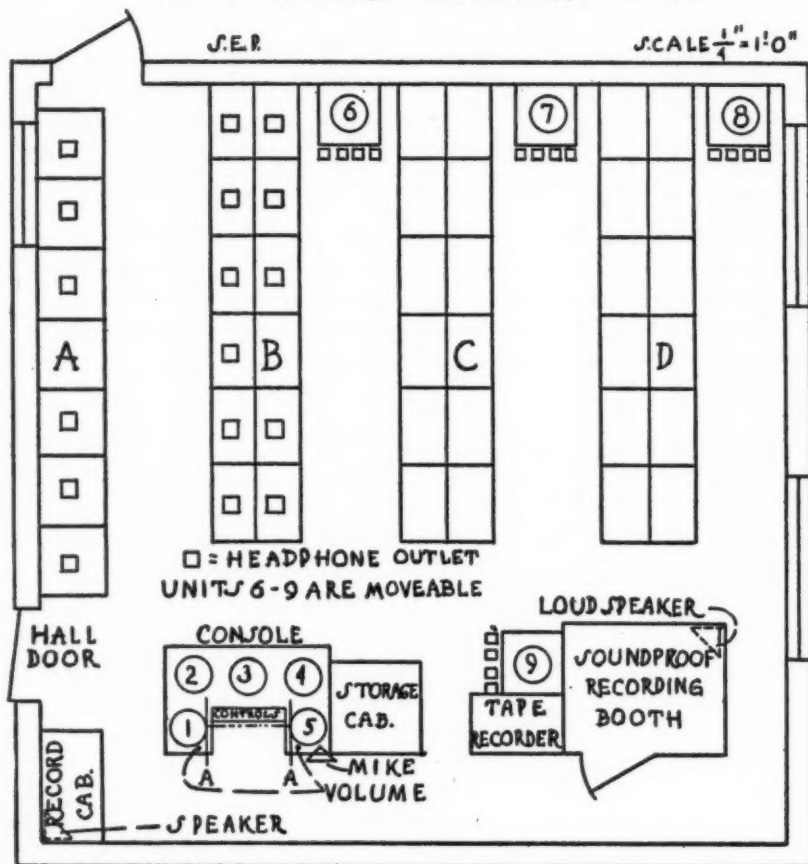
The language laboratory definitely helps language courses to qualify as General Education subjects because better aural comprehension and self-expression in the language make it more functional and applicable to life situations. The laboratory technique stimulates greater student interest in languages by convincing the learner that he can understand native speakers.

One of the prime values of the laboratory is that the student has little difficulty concentrating on what comes into his ears directly from the earphones, especially if the listening period is not too long. In addition, he repeats what he hears with the text open in front of him so that he associates the sounds with the written words, strengthening the relationship between the classroom work and a conversational objective. Another factor that increases the value of the laboratory is that the student can make periodic recordings of his pronunciation and observe his own improvement. From the viewpoint of the teacher, the laboratory is a great help in that it gives the students extra repetitive drill as well as helping with remedial work. To the student, it means all the extra practice he may wish, either to improve his pronunciation or to make up work that he has missed.

The language laboratory is a definite success and occupies an increasingly important part in the general program of language teaching. Los Angeles City College reports: "Although this equipment has been



PASADENA CITY COLLEGE LANGUAGE LABORATORY



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in use less than a year, it has been enthusiastically received by both students and instructors, and it would be hard to imagine dispensing with it now." At Mt. San Antonio College they have found that: "There is better pronunciation in oral reading than before, remarkable improvement in oral and aural facility especially when supplemented by regular oral-aural practice in class, and a phenomenal improvement of student interest, especially among beginners." Both the faculty and students of San Bernardino Valley College feel that the language laboratory techniques used there have been valuable in learning the language. The laboratory at Santa Monica City College "has proved valuable in stimulating interest and in lessening the 'mortality rate' in our rather large beginning classes. We believe that we have noted a general improvement in pronunciation and reading ability and there have been individual cases of striking improvement." Occidental College reports that "the student doing regular listening advances much faster than the non-listening student and seems to do the classwork with greater ease." At the University of Southern California a recent development in the language program has been the extension of the laboratory facilities to students of Spanish in the evening classes, as a consequence of a test of their aural comprehension which showed that results were only sixty per cent of those achieved by day students trained by the methods outlined earlier.

Certain recommendations may be made as a result of this survey of language laboratory experience in our area. First, similar language laboratory facilities should be made available in all high schools and junior colleges. The size and equipment of such an installation are not of prime importance because it has been shown that even the simplest equipment can bring worthwhile results. Second, textbook publishers should record at least representative selections from the whole book. These recordings should be made at 33 r.p.m. so that as much material as possible can be put in a limited space. Finally, there should be exchange of materials, information, and techniques among the schools having laboratories. A language laboratory in each secondary school in this area could quicken the interest and enthusiasm of many young people as well as give them wider opportunities to increase their linguistic capabilities.

Appendix A

Approximate Cost of Typical Laboratory Equipment

| | |
|---|------------------|
| Turntables | \$100.00 (each) |
| Earphones | \$2.50 to \$8.00 |
| Console and Wiring (Usually from Army Surplus)..... | \$200.00 |

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| | |
|---------------------------|----------|
| Microphones (Brush) | \$ 15.00 |
| Tape Recorders | |
| Ekotape Jr. | \$175.00 |
| Brush | \$200.00 |
| Ekotape | \$385.00 |
| Concertone | \$446.00 |
| Disc Cutter (Presto)..... | \$800.00 |
| Tapes (per dozen)..... | \$ 40.00 |
| Record Blanks | \$ 1.35 |

Appendix B

Suppliers of Laboratory Equipment

Los Angeles and Vicinity:

Kierulff Electronics Inc. and Co.

820 West Olympic Ave.

Los Angeles, California

Magnetic Recorders Co.

7120 Melrose Ave.

Los Angeles 46, California

Radio and Television Equipment Co. (Att.: Harry Winslow)

207 Oak St.

Santa Ana, California

Audio-Visual Supply Co.

247 Broadway

Laguna Beach, California

Coast Visual Education Co.

5620 Hollywood Blvd.

Hollywood, California

Dow Radio Inc.

1759 E. Colorado St.

Pasadena, California

Mattson-Cowley Corporation

1487 Lincoln Ave.

Pasadena 3, California

San Bernardino:

Inland Electronics

863 Colton Ave.

San Bernardino, California

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San Diego:

Shanks & Wright (Att.: Mr. Si Simon)
2045 Kettner Blvd.
San Diego, California

Western Radio & Supply Co. (Att.: Mr. Art Hunt)
1415 India
San Diego, California

For other suppliers, consult:

"Buyer's Guide of Audio-Visual Equipment, Material, and Supplies" (\$.75)

Audio-Visual Education Association of California
Southern Section
808 North Spring St.
Los Angeles, California

Appendix C

Scale drawings of the Language Laboratories at San Bernardino, Mt. San Antonio, and Pasadena.

Pasadena City College

Andre Gide and the Social Problem

Under the title *Littérature engagée*, obviously reminiscent of Jean-Paul Sartre, were published various texts (articles, speeches, letters, and a play, *Robert ou l'Intérêt général*), written during the period of Gide's career which has been termed his "honeymoon with communism." In the case of Gide, "engaged" is hardly a fitting word. It cannot be said that he was ever fully engaged in political action. Nor did he feel engaged, i.e., bound, by his declarations of 1932 any more than he did five years later when he publicly recognized his error. But this *engagement* (and here lies the interest it has for us) represents one of the extreme positions Gide was to consider or assume in a life entirely devoted to the search for oneself and the liberation of the individual. At one extreme there is Lafcadio, the hero of the *acte gratuit* who has freed himself from all the conventions of society. At the other, there is the position of the man who, embracing communism as a new faith, renounces his freedom the better to serve a common cause. In creating Lafcadio, Gide was merely an artist experimenting, in the abstract, with the possibilities of the individual. But in his venture into communism, we see Gide dealing, for the first time and rather awkwardly, with social problems and seeking an answer to his lifelong yearnings. As usual, the episode is interesting not so much in itself as in the drama and conflicts it developed in Gide, and should be examined in the light of his evolution and thought.

A double evolution, artistic and religious, led Gide to communism.

It may seem strange to find Gide abandoning his position as a pure artist, especially when we consider that he has reached the threshold of old age. That artists become more and more aware of what goes on around them (social questions, international conflicts) is, however, increasingly apparent. Gide, Proust, Claudel, Valéry were the last writers who conceived of art as an absolute, a transcendental universe untouched by contingencies. But even Valéry could not remain aloof and was prompted to sound the alarm when he realized that the world of today was on the verge of destruction. Unlike Valéry, who remained an observer and a lucid analyst, Gide was caught by a wave of political mysticism, the kind of mysticism which will perhaps be considered by future historians as the distinctive mark of our time. Thus it was nat-

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ural that he should shift his attention from moral questions to social and political problems. The temptation to broaden his outlook is, however, great in any artist. An artist is essentially a non-conformist. In the case of Gide this non-conformity was a reaction against his puritanical education, and art was a means by which he could escape from the traditional notions of good and evil. There are moments indeed when Gide can rise above the necessity of passing judgment, and then he creates Lafcadio. Gide may have given passing attention to the Dreyfus case, but to him it was no more than a theoretical problem. (He was merely boasting when he declared that his interest in social problems went back to the Dreyfus case, and that he was conscious of the evils of colonization at the time of *Amyntas*). But there comes a time when the artist finds his own security threatened, when he discovers that Man, the object of his study, cannot be separated from humanity in general, when he considers it useful to formulate an opinion. Such a time came for Victor Hugo and other romanticists. But then the artist finds himself in a false position, anxious as he is to participate in the life of his time and yet desirous of preserving his independence and freedom of judgment. Hugo in *Fonction du Poète* clearly indicated this double movement of the pendulum when he stated that the poet should be a leader in the affairs of men, but that his thought matures best in solitude. Constantly in his *Journal* we see Gide one moment eager to engage in action, even willing to give his life for the success of the USSR—a very gratuitous gesture—and the next anxious to withdraw and regain his freedom.

Other and more personal considerations may have helped to bring about this new outlook on art. After *Les Faux-Monnayeurs*, after *OEdipe*, Gide finds that his creative power is on the wane, and as he turns his attention to new problems, he hopes that a new faith will stimulate and rejuvenate him. It has been said, with some measure of truth, that this "exhaustion" of Gide as an artist is the consequence of his emancipation from the conventional code of morality. The day when he threw to the winds sexual taboos, when he refused to be ridden by moral scruples, when he declared that sin did not exist, Gide killed himself as an artist. He needed something to protest against, something to criticize in an indirect way, *de biais*, as Roger Martin du Gard so aptly remarked. If Gide's *Journal* during the years 1932-1937 was never more copious, being a record of all his perplexities, his creative output in the realm of fiction (*Geneviève*, *Robert*) was meager and, by Gide's own admission, not of the usual quality.

"Emotionally, temperamentally, intellectually I have always been a

communist."¹ "What brings me to the Communists is not theories, which I only half understand and am not concerned with; it is merely knowing that among them there are some for whom this state of things is *intolerable*."² "What leads me to Communism is not Marx, it is the Gospel."³ Thus Gide explains that he has finally discovered himself, the true nature of his feelings and thought. He embraces the new faith for sentimental and religious reasons, the desire to devote himself to a cause that was supposed to bring salvation to the world, a feeling of indignation in the face of present-day conditions, a despair of Western values. It is curious to notice how, in this case, a religious fervor, which in Gide was genuine and never died, led to the renouncing of all religion. As the religious ardor of his youth cooled, as the conversion to Catholicism of many of his friends opened his eyes to what he called the dangers of religion—prejudice, bias, insincerity, intolerance—he gave more and more to Man what he withdrew from God, believing in the end that God is nothing but the perfection of Man, since Man creates God in his own image. He endows the divinity with all the qualities he possesses or can conceive of. To pray, to call to God for help is beneath one's dignity, and God, if he exists, esteems men only if they fight to improve their lot and make the world a better place for themselves. A belated disciple of the eighteenth century, Gide believes in the progress and the ultimate perfection of man; he rejects the idea that the final word has been said, that man's condition, material and social, will always be the same. Poverty, misfortune and evil most of the time are man-made, he declares. Hence the necessity of action on a social plane, and the pre-eminence of social questions over moral problems. If we are to change the nature of man, it is necessary first to alter the social system which prevents his development. In this Christianity has failed. At a meeting in 1935,⁴ speaking before such supporters of the Church as Mauriac, Massis, and Maritain, Gide strongly emphasized his disappointment in Christianity which could have prevailed and fulfilled the teaching of Christ. Not only has religion failed to solve the social problem, but it seems even to be in the way. It preaches acceptance and obedience, it promises an after-life in which all wrongs will be righted, but it does nothing to alleviate inequality and suffering on this earth. Besides, the Church, betraying Christ, is on the wrong side of the barricade: it has signed a pact with

¹*Journal*, 27 February, 1932. (All quotations from the *Journal* are from *The Journals of André Gide*, translated by Justin O'Brien, 4 volumes, Knopf, New York, 1947-51.)

²*Journal*, 14 April, 1933.

³*Journal*, June, 1933.

⁴"Entretien à l'Union pour la Vérité."

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the worst powers of this world. Gide will go further and conclude that atheism is a necessity. Since all religions develop fanaticism and lead to wars, the only logical remedy is to wipe out all religions. In 1932, Gide could write: "Only atheism can pacify the world today."⁸ The absence of religious dogma in the USSR seemed to him one of the most promising signs.

Complete liberation of man from the shackles of the past, unbounded joy and happiness resulting from it—these two themes are lyrically treated in *Les Nouvelles Nourritures*. Started in 1917, the book was finished after Gide's so-called conversion and bears traces of his new outlook. *Les Nourritures Terrestres* of 1897 were Nietzschean in character. In it Gide had explored all possibilities of enrichment, but he was thinking especially of an *élite* of which Ménélaque is typical. In *Les Nouvelles Nourritures* he is thinking of man as part of a collective humanity and he claims that everyone has a right to happiness. But happiness should not spring from the misfortunes of others, and who could enjoy riches which impoverish other men? The youth for whom he is writing, the "new" man he addresses as "comrade," if he wants to live fully, should not be tied by the past, the past in the life of each one of us as well as the heritage of the centuries. Undoubtedly trying to justify his new metamorphosis and to preserve his liberty of action, Gide claims that he favors a certain "inconsequence" in life (he will find examples of inconsequence in natural history), that he has tried to preserve within himself a certain expectancy, "un perpétuel, insaisissable devenir." "Know thyself" is a pernicious maxim. What is important is not the knowledge but the development of oneself, which often cannot be foreseen. (The caterpillar does not know that it will become a butterfly.) The past which may have been useful may also be a hindrance in the march of progress. Gide promises man a beautiful future if only he will be bold, free himself, and become what he really is: "Ose devenir qui tu es." It may be argued that this is a plea for individualism rather than for communism. The *Journal*, however, points out that there is no contradiction between the two, as individualism in its highest form implies the renouncing of individualism. On the other hand, the new form of society should be such as to guarantee the sound development of the individual.

This new philosophy and this part of Gide's life must, of course, be studied against the background of a troubled period, a period in which

⁸*Journal*, 13 June, 1932.

⁹*Journal*, 27 July, 1931.

very few minds could afford not to take sides. In the thirties, history takes a tragic turn: an economic depression over Europe, the menace of Hitlerism on the other side of the Rhine (profoundly disturbing to a Frenchman), violence, wars and threats of war in various parts of the globe (aggression in Ethiopia, occupation of the Rhineland, civil war in Spain). Against the menace of fascism the Popular Front is formed in 1936. The world seems to be divided into conflicting ideologies. Many are beginning to think that the old structure of Europe is crumbling. On the other hand, the Soviet revolution seems to be successful, and the USSR is viewed as a sort of paradise from which will spring the humanity of the future. Lest we should be too prone to accuse Gide of blindness, let us recognize that the high hopes raised by the USSR attracted many idealists, leftist intellectuals, and sympathizers.⁷ Their dream is that the old democracies and the USSR will eventually join hands. The pacific campaign led by the communists leads to the belief that Russia is a sure ally in the face of the fascist threat.

For Gide the new regime in the east had many attractions: "I should like to see, he says, what can be produced by a state without religion, a society without a family. Religion and the family are the two worst enemies of progress."⁸ He watches it as one watches an experiment, from without, and inwardly he is rather glad that this should take place outside of France. The advantage of such a position is, of course, that he can dream of an ideal communism, unmarred by unpleasant realities. Indeed Gide remains an outsider and an observer, always reserving the right to criticize and to judge. He is against rather than for something: against injustice, oppression of the individual (here he is on firm ground, and he did not have to force himself when he intervened in favor of Thaelmann and Dimitrov); against capitalism to which he owed an oversheltered life and privileges that his puritanism, at times, could not tolerate; against religion; against the family which fettered him. Thus we see Gide coming to communism for personal reasons and waging, in relative security, a private battle against society. Gide, to be sure, is more interested in himself than in the real problems which communism poses. He does not try to probe into the structure of society, he needs to be guided among the intricacies of political and economic problems. In all matters which are foreign to him he tries hard to form an opinion. In the main he is a follower.

Real drama comes to him when he debates the questions which are

⁷Cf. Richard Crossman: *The God That Failed*, Harper, 1949.

⁸*Journal*, 27 July, 1931.

close to his heart: freedom of the individual, freedom of thought, the *raison d'être* of art. Is thought stifled in a communist regime? Can art survive in a period of social revolution? At first his love for the USSR makes him forget his most cherished principles. Communism is authoritarian, he finds, as is Fascism. But then he adds: "Why and how have I come to approve in the former what I blame in the latter? It is because in German terrorism I see a resurgence of the most deplorable and detestable past, in the establishment of Soviet society, an unlimited promise for the future."⁹ He will again, in 1935, approve blindly and publicly the severe measures taken by the Soviets against Victor Serge, a Belgian writer living in Russia who had come to change his views about the regime, was considered a kind of heretic, and was refused permission to leave the country. "In such a case, a trusting attitude is the greatest proof of love we can give to the USSR."¹⁰ Less than two years later, when the love has all but vanished, will come the resounding protest at the end of his *Retour de l'U.R.S.S.*: nowhere is the mind more enslaved than in the USSR. But he would have tolerated this enslavement as a temporary sacrifice, as one accepts a means to an end, if he had seen there as a result tangible signs of progress, social and material. The notion of liberty is by no means a simple one, and Gide may not have gone into it deeply enough.¹¹ What is disturbing, however, is the ease with which he changes his mind. If he returns here to his former position, and vehemently rises against authoritarianism of any sort, he will in 1940 declare himself ready to accept a dictatorship which would have certainly restricted his freedom, including his freedom of thought: "I should gladly put up with constraints . . . and should accept a dictatorship, which is the only thing, I fear, that might save us from decomposition."¹²

As for art, he claimed that the social revolution would bring about a new literature whose object would be the study of *l'homme naturel*. The natural man so far has been hidden under the mask of conventions. Classical literature had given a partial, incomplete, not to say fictitious picture of humanity. Hence the "impious" character of the culture of the past which should give way to a "joyful and triumphant" literature. Still Gide does not think that the artist should receive directions, obey orders or seek the approval of a political party. It may be, he concludes, that art can no longer live in revolutionary times.

⁹"Fascisme" (21 March, 1933) in *Littérature engagée*, Gallimard, 1950, p. 24 (Translation mine).

¹⁰"Congrès international pour la défense de la culture," 25 June, 1935. Cf. *Littérature engagée*, p. 96.

¹¹Cf. Léon Pierre-Quint, *André Gide*, Stock, 1952, p. 282.

¹²*Journal*, 10 July, 1940.

This crisis which had taken Gide so far from his usual paths came to an end in 1936 after the trip to the USSR, although it must not be believed that the change came abruptly. The two little books he published on his return, *Retour de l'U.R.S.S.* and *Retouches à mon Retour de l'U.R.S.S.*, two "pamphlets" as he called them, thereby minimizing their importance, are mostly a record of his disappointment. The disappointment was not in Russia itself, for he loved the country and the people, but in the regime. He found there the social abuses, the privileges he thought belonged only in a capitalist society, conformity, narrow patriotism, complete subservience to the state. In 1937, he felt it his duty to open the eyes of the young people he might have led astray by his previous declarations. Then he drifted more and more away from social questions. Fifteen years later, when Léon Pierre-Quint asked him what his position was regarding Communism, he had only this to say: "I believe these questions are not for us to answer."¹³ There was an answer, however, and a clear one. In his last book, *Ainsi soit-il*, he wished he had been more severe toward Communism in his two "pamphlets." Toward the end of his life he came to express more conservative, not to say more conventional views. According to Enid Starkie who attended the Bryce Memorial lecture Gide delivered at Oxford University in 1947, he reaffirmed his belief in the virtues of the individual, in the necessity of preserving one's freedom in the face of organized authority. He also pointed out the dangers of complete liberty. Complete liberty would destroy the individual and society unless corrected by a certain discipline, and this discipline might well come from the past and tradition. Read in this new light, the story of *Thésée* (1946) takes on a particular significance. The hero is a strong, purposeful and courageous individual who is able to return safely from the maze, but only because he had clung tightly to the thread which linked him with the past.¹⁴ Finally Gide interpreted symbolically a few lines of Virgil describing Aeneas fleeing from burning Troy with his old father on his back. The old father, he said, represents the burden of the past, and each one of us in these days of turmoil is carrying the weight of the past on his back, the past which is our Christian Civilization. It is our duty to see to it that it is not destroyed.

Save the past? Cling to tradition? This is a far cry from the daring challenge and hope in the future Gide expressed in *Les Nouvelles Nourritures*. There is so little of the Gidian touch here that Gide himself preferred not to have his lecture published. We may well suspect that

¹³Quoted by Léon Pierre-Quint, *op. cit.*, p. 250 (Translation mine).

¹⁴Enid Starkie's interpretation in Richard Crossman's *The God That Failed*, p. 172.

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these words on the value of tradition were *de circonstance*, exclusively for English consumption and did not represent the permanent substance of his thought. But then we may ask: can we find anything stable in Gide's thought? For Gide, to remain faithful to a doctrine was to perish. Critics of late have been very severe with him.¹⁵ That Gide was an amateur in politics has been amply demonstrated. That he was also poorly equipped for action is also true. Why then did he, "a creature of dialogue," not "a creature of affirmation" as he defined himself, so noisily welcome a regime about which, by his own admission, he knew almost nothing? Why did he so naïvely and thoughtlessly throw the weight of his prestige on the wrong scale at a time when his influence had never been greater? Naïvely? Some will say that, at bottom, he was profoundly insincere. It is now a known fact that he had expressed great doubts on the value of Russian communism *before* he went to Russia (as early as 1934, according to Roger Martin du Gard). He knew he would be disappointed. But he could not resist the temptation of playing the role of a great public figure, of proving on his return that he, a free man, could condemn what he had so fervently praised. He also realized that whatever position he took, he was assured of an enthusiastic following.

Thus the celebrated Gidian qualities, *disponibilité*, integrity, sincerity, seen from a certain angle, take on a rather unpleasant aspect. Maurice Lime, who was one of Gide's companions during the communist period, uses strong words to describe him: dissimulation, lack of courage, lack of character, extreme selfishness, instability and treachery, pusillanimity. The final verdict: *un salaud*. (Let us add that Lime may be speaking with the prejudice of a writer whose literary merits went unrecognized by the master!) Gide was genuinely attracted, on a theoretical plane, by what he knew of communism. Yet he did not fail to realize that he had placed himself in a false position, felt uncomfortable as a result, but rather enjoyed the drama he had thus created for himself. "It is not impossible that, thinking he had a supreme duty to perform, a superior mission to carry out, he yielded at that time to I know not what nostalgic call to martyrdom."¹⁶ "One must surpass oneself," he had written, and again "one must be in agreement with oneself." The two maxims, which are really contradictory, could only be reconciled, and yet not for long, in Gide's highly complex personality.

¹⁵Pierre Herbart, *A la recherche d'André Gide*, Gallimard, 1952; Maurice Lime, *Gide, tel je l'ai connu*, Julliard, 1952; Roger Martin du Gard, *Notes sur André Gide, 1913-1951*, Gallimard, 1951.

¹⁶Roger Martin du Gard, *Notes sur André Gide*, p. 45 (Translation mine).

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Gide did not offer any solution to the social problems which preoccupied him to the point of obsession. On the contrary the very nature of his personality and thought prevented him from making any constructive criticism. Rather his influence would have worked in the opposite direction: he could not assert himself except in opposition to something. (A desire to destroy is strikingly brought out by all we know of his married life). One may then wonder if Gide's stature was increased by his political *engagement*, or even by his anti-communism of later years, and it is not difficult to conclude that, in this respect, his influence as a *maître à penser* has been pernicious. In his last years, Gide deplored the fact that everything he had held sacred was either vanishing or bankrupt. Might a good share of the blame not fall on Gide himself?

Western Reserve University

Professional Notes

MODERN LANGUAGE FORUM wishes to call the attention of its readers to the three-year Foreign Language Program being carried on by the Modern Language Association of America under a grant from the Rockefeller Foundation. Begun in 1952, the FL Program is a constructive inquiry into the role which foreign languages should play in American life, and should be of direct concern to everyone connected with the teaching of foreign languages and literatures. The program started with the basic conviction that "the active part that the United States is now taking in world affairs makes it desirable that a greater number of Americans than ever before have a knowledge of foreign languages and cultures" (Rockefeller Foundation's *Annual Report* for 1952). As William R. Parker, Executive Secretary of MLA and Director of the FL Program, states in his "Report on the Foreign Language Program" (*PMLA*, LXIX [March 1954], 12): "We proposed to survey the foreign language situation in the United States and to see what can be done to improve it. We allowed ourselves three years to learn the most important facts and to *begin*, at least, the long process of persuading both the public and our own profession that a changed world demands changed attitudes toward foreign language study."

It is manifestly impossible for us to summarize the progress that has been achieved during the first year and a half of the program or to outline what still remains to be done. (Mr. Parker has mentioned the highlights in the article quoted above.) We do want to emphasize, however, that one of the biggest tasks lying before us is to get as many members of our profession as possible to make speeches or to write articles on the FL Program addressed to the non-academic public. The MLA staff is busy right now preparing materials—facts, figures, and arguments—for use in "spreading the gospel." The FORUM wholeheartedly urges all members of MLASC to become active participants in the FL Program by talking to your colleagues, administrators, PTA groups, Rotary Clubs in your neighborhood—to all persons who, directly or indirectly are concerned with the results of this program.

In connection with the FL Program, we note the following: As of March, MLA has learned of two California colleges offering summer FL schools and workshops: Mills College (La Maison Française, 21 June-30 July) and Occidental College (Language Workshop, 21 June-30 July: German, French, Spanish, Italian; elementary school workshop available) . . . Los Angeles has the largest current program of FL teaching in the elementary schools, with about 75,000 pupils en-

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rolled in Spanish courses. [What about other languages?—Ed.] For full details of a state-by-state survey, send for the free thirty-page report by Kenneth W. Mildenberger, "Status of Foreign Language Study in American Elementary Schools, Fall Term 1953" (Office of Education, Committee on FL Teaching, U. S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, Washington 25, D. C.) . . . The MLA (6 Washington Square North, New York 3, N. Y.) for fifteen cents will send a nineteen-page mimeographed bulletin on "Foreign Languages in Elementary Schools: Some Questions and Answers." This report was formulated by a conference of prominent educators held last December in New York; present at this conference was Ruth R. Ginsburg, Supervisor of Foreign Languages, Los Angeles Board of Education . . . To discuss the implications of this report and possible ways of implementing it, there will be a two-day conference at MLA headquarters on June 11-12. Official delegates will be sent by many educational associations; among the participants will be Mrs. Margit MacRae, Assistant Supervisor of Conversational Spanish in the San Diego schools.

Books and articles on the FL Program: "Foreign Language Entrance and Degree Requirements," *PMLA*, LXVIII (September 1953), 40-55. Out of a total of 767 colleges and universities listed, requirements are given for thirty-eight California institutions . . . William R. Parker, "The Language Curtain," *School and Society*, October 31, 1953, 129-133. The author gives a seven-point program for getting rid of some of America's preconceived notions about language studies and for preparing "more and more Americans to meet the rest of the world half way linguistically." . . . Theodore Andersson, *The Teaching of Foreign Languages in the Elementary School*, D. C. Heath and Co., 1953, 126 pp. (\$1.25) . . . Theodore Andersson, "The Modern Language Association FL Program Reports Progress," *French Review*, XXVII (April 1954), 374-377 . . . Theodore Huebner, *Opportunities in Foreign Languages*, Vocational Guidance Manuals Co., 1954 (to be published) . . .

MLA announces the following reprints, available free, as long as the supply lasts at 6 Washington Square North, New York 3, N. Y.:

1. "The Language Curtain," Middlebury College commencement address, August 1953, by William R. Parker (reprinted from *School and Society*, 31 Oct. 1953).
2. "Opinions Worth Hearing" (FL Bulletin No. 11).
3. "FL Entrance Requirements in American Colleges Granting the A.B. Degree," by Kenneth Mildenberger (from *MLJ*, Dec. 1953).

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4. Addresses on the FL Program delivered at the 67th Annual Meeting of the MLA, Boston, 1952 (from *PMLA*, March 1953).
5. "Developing Cultural Understanding through FL Study: A Report of the MLA Interdisciplinary Seminar on Languages and Culture," summer 1953 (from *PMLA*, December 1953).
6. "Report on the FL Program" by the Director, MLA Annual Meeting, Chicago, 1953 (from *PMLA*, March 1954).
7. "Stand Up and Be Counted" (FL Bulletin No. 21).
8. "The MLA, 1883-1953," by W. R. Parker (from *PMLA*, Sept. 1953).
9. "FLs," a folder on career opportunities for FL students, published as the April 1953 Bulletin of the University of Michigan College of Arts and Sciences.
10. "FLs in American Education," an address by W. R. Parker, delivered at Schoolmen's Week, Philadelphia, April 1953 (reprinted from the Proceedings).
11. "FLs and Graduate Study," an address by W. R. Parker, Association of Graduate Schools, October 1953 (reprinted from the Journal of Proceedings).
12. A reprint of full-page items from the FMO and FLP sections of several issues of *PMLA*.

For the benefit of those deterred by the rain from attending the February meeting of the MLASC Research Council held at UCLA, we call attention to the attractive eight-page brochure prepared by this group and entitled "The World Beckons to Those Who Know Foreign Languages." A copy may be obtained by writing to the Research Council, MLASC, Los Angeles City College, Los Angeles 29.

One of the broadcasts of NBC's University of Chicago Round Table early this year was a discussion by Leon E. Dostert (Georgetown University), Stephen A. Freeman (Middlebury College), and Norman A. McQuown (University of Chicago) called "People Speaking to People"—a consideration of the importance of FL study and the ways in which the general public can be led to encourage FL programs in our schools.

AUDIO-VISUAL AIDS

A new catalog of the Franco-American Audio-Visual Distribution Center is available from the French Cultural Services, 972 Fifth Avenue, New York 21, N. Y. (Please send stamps for postage) . . . Audio

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Devices, Inc., 444 Madison Avenue, New York 22, puts out a monthly publication called *Audio Record* which is available free upon request. In the issue of September 1953 (Vol. 9, No. 6), there is a list of the various kinds of magnetic tape recorders now on the market, with illustrations, descriptions and prices . . . Fernand L. Marty briefly describes the linguistics workshop in French at Middlebury College (Vermont) in "Teaching French with Tape," an article contained in another brochure put out by Audio Devices, Inc.: *The Teacher Talks About Sound Recording*. Still another booklet published by the same company is *Fundamentals of Magnetic Recording* (1951) by C. J. Le Bel.

A 48-page "Listing of Educational Recordings, Filmstrips, and Equipment for More Effective Learning" will be sent free upon request to Educational Services, 1730 Eye St., N.W., Washington 6, D.C. It lists available foreign language courses on records, 35mm. filmstrips on many subjects, and equipment by various audio-visual manufacturers . . . By writing to Lorraine Music Co., 39186 47th St., Long Island City 4, N. Y., you can obtain current catalogs of recordings of French and Spanish songs, plays, and poetry. A verbatim text is furnished with each record at no extra charge . . . We call your attention to the series of LIFE Filmstrips based on that magazine's pictorial essays in the fields of history, art, literature, and science. Each filmstrip, in full color, is accompanied by a booklet containing extensive supplementary lecture notes. For a descriptive catalog, write to LIFE Filmstrips, 9 Rockefeller Plaza, New York 20, N. Y. . . . Goldsmith's Music Shop (401 West 42nd St., New York 36, N. Y.) is about to issue a full catalog of FL records for use in teaching diction, theater, folklore, etc. . . . Foreign film classics, including *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari*, *The Last Laugh*, *Symphonie Pastorale*, *Marie du Port*, *The Rules of the Game*, *Pépé le Moko*, and many others, are being distributed by Trans-World Films, Inc., 2209 East 75th Street, Chicago 49, Illinois . . . The AATF National Information Bureau (Armand Bégué, Director, Brooklyn College, Brooklyn 10, N. Y.) has a large selection of realia available for distribution.

SUMMER STUDY

Secondary and elementary grade teachers of French are invited to explore the possibilities of studying French language and customs on the scene this summer. Theodore Andersson, Director of Yale University's Master of Arts in Teaching Program, has announced that applications are being received for the Yale Reid Hall 1954 Summer Session in Paris. Under the joint direction of Professor Andersson and Miss

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Dorothy F. Leet, President of Reid Hall, the six-week session begins on July 5 and will end on August 14. The courses are open to all teachers of French . . . The College of Education and the FL Departments of the University of Minnesota are holding a FL Summer Workshop, supported by a \$19,860 grant from the (Ford) Fund for the Advancement of Education . . . Purdue University will offer its third annual Workshop in Audio-Visual Techniques for Teachers of Foreign Languages in two sessions this summer: June 21-July 3 and July 12-24 . . . The University of Vienna Summer School at Schloss Traunsee, Gmunden, Austria, will offer courses conducted in English open to American students from July 26 to September 5. The Institute of International Education, 1 East 67th Street, New York 21, is screening applications for this program in the United States . . . The University of Strasbourg announces summer courses in French and German language, literature, and civilization, from July 5 to October 9, divided into two sessions of eight and six weeks . . . Teachers interested in other summer language programs might consult the April issue of *PMLA*, where a list is given of thirty-eight institutions offering such programs.

MISCELLANY

The University of Miami (Coral Gables, Fla.,) held a Language Week February 14-20, with television and radio programs, demonstration classes and laboratories, film programs, and round table discussions centering about the theme: "America Awakens to Foreign Language Needs." . . . The Seventh Annual University of Kentucky Foreign Language Conference was held at Lexington April 22-24. Sections were held for Classical Languages, German, French, Italian, Spanish, Hebrew, Slavonic Languages, Latin American Literature, Biblical and Patristic Languages, Linguistics, Folklore, Comparative Literature, Teaching of Languages in the Elementary School, High School Teaching of Classical and Modern Languages, and International Relations . . . The Modern Language Association of Southern California held its annual Spring Meeting on April 24 at Chaffey Junior College and Chaffey High School in Ontario . . . MLASC and FORUM give their hearty endorsement to the Second Annual Foreign Language Speaking Contest held for high school students of Southern California by Alpha Mu Gamma, National Honorary University Language Society. The preliminary contests were to be held May 8 at UCLA and at USC, with the finals in Founders Hall at USC on May 15. Last year's competition was the first such interlingual contest, with speakers in German, Spanish, French and Latin. (The Latin speaker won first

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honors). About sixty contestants from forty high schools, both public and private, were to take part in this year's competition . . . A UNESCO report, "An Account of the International Seminar on the Contribution of the Teaching of Foreign Languages Towards Education for Living in a World Community," is obtainable from the UNESCO Relations Staff, Department of State, Washington 25, D. C. . . . The National Association of Manufacturers has released the findings of a special committee of educators and industrialists who made a two-year study of major controversial issues concerning education in the United States. Their report is called "This We Believe About Education."

Just as this issue of MODERN LANGUAGE FORUM went to press, we received a 130-page book which we feel merits the attention of all language teachers. Entitled *The National Interest and Foreign Languages*, it is a "Discussion Guide and Work Paper" prepared by William R. Parker for CITIZEN CONSULTATIONS, a program initiated by the U. S. National Commission for UNESCO (U. S. Government Printing Office, Washington 25, D.C., April 1954, paper, \$0.45). Mr. Parker was aided in drawing up this report by members of the MLA staff, and received helpful criticism by many teachers and professors (including Professors B. Q. Morgan of Stanford and Howard L. Nostrand of the University of Washington). The final draft was read, criticized, and approved for publication by a committee designated by the U. S. National Commission for UNESCO: Leon E. Dostert (Director, Georgetown University Institute of Languages and Linguistics), Mrs. Newton P. Leonard (President, National Congress of Parents and Teachers), Earl J. McGrath (President, University of Kansas City), Thomas G. Pullen, Jr. (State Superintendent of Schools, Maryland), and Miss Emilie Margaret White (Director of Foreign Languages, District of Columbia Public Schools).

The purpose of this CITIZEN CONSULTATION is, as the author says in his preface (p. iii), "to discuss whether or not the national interest would be served by increased study of foreign languages in the United States and, if so, what sort of language study would best serve both the Nation and the individual citizen." Designed to furnish facts, figures, and statements for use in civic discussions, the present "Work Paper" covers almost every conceivable aspect of the subject in an attempt to clarify the issues involved. It does not neglect the negative side of the question, but it is definitely in favor of the affirmative.

The first section sets up six basic questions that badly need answer-

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ing: 1) Which modern language should be learned in addition to English? 2) Should the spoken language be stressed, or should we concentrate on a "reading knowledge?" 3) How many Americans should be offered the opportunity of learning a second language as part of their public school education? 4) How long should the second language be studied in order to furnish a reasonable minimum of satisfaction and profit? 5) Should foreign cultures be taught along with the language? 6) What training must be offered for the language teachers of tomorrow?

This is followed by a discussion of America's future foreign language needs as considered from various points of view (e.g., the armed forces, government, business, society, etc.). One of the areas which would most benefit from an increased knowledge of foreign languages is that of international understanding:

Never have so many Americans encountered so much foreign speech with so little equipment for communication and with so much depending upon communication . . . Remember the American reporters (it was only a few years ago) who interviewed the French General Juin and quoted him as "demanding" American aid for the French war in Indochina? (A deceptive word, *demandeur*, except for those who know a little French!) Remember your fellow citizens (it was only a while ago) who accused UNESCO of preaching world government and one-world citizenship? UNESCO headquarters are in Paris, and much UNESCO talk and writing are originally in French. UNESCO did and does promote *civisme international*, which until March 1952 usually got loosely translated into English as "world citizenship." It does not, of course, mean world citizenship in any legal sense (*citoyenneté internationale*), implying rights and duties between a state and an individual. But a single, too casual translation came close to destroying one of mankind's best hopes for peace. (pp. 18-19).

The section dealing with "Foreign Languages and Business" will be of special interest to teachers, who are constantly being asked to defend language study on purely utilitarian grounds. News stories and quotations from leading businessmen show clearly that business concerns today want their employees to be "on speaking terms" with the peoples of other countries. We would do well to arm ourselves with a few of these facts and figures in order to be able to answer clearly the oft-heard charge of the uselessness of language study.

A third section of the book discusses the values of language study,

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the problem of differing objectives, common misconceptions about learning languages, the question of "language aptitude," and the loss of skill through disuse. It ends with a summary of language teaching in various foreign countries, pointing out that, in general, "it begins earlier, extends over many more years, and involves a much larger proportion of the children attending school, and, of course, achieves more conspicuous results than it does in the United States" (p. 68). Mr. Parker has furnished a valuable chapter on the history of foreign language study in this country, including a statement of the case against it. In this latter section he has summarized the arguments currently being advanced by those who are "opposed to wasting valuable time" on impractical subjects. The book is rounded out by a glance at the "Current Academic Situation," with sections dealing with languages in elementary schools, secondary schools, colleges, graduate schools, and professional schools; teacher training problems; audio-visual aids; structural linguistics; language and area studies; and the teaching of English as a foreign language.

This "Work Paper" is, in effect, an elaborate report on the findings of the first year and a half of the FL Program discussed earlier in this section. As such, it should receive the widest possible distribution: school and university libraries, teachers in other fields, school administrators, and influential persons not directly connected with teaching should all have and study this document. It goes without saying that every teacher of foreign languages ought to familiarize himself with the material contained in *The National Interest and Foreign Languages* and use it in his discussions of this vital question.

On April 9, at Providence, Rhode Island, the Director of the FL Program addressed the Northeast Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages. Most of his speech was a report on the FL Program, but near its conclusion he offered his personal credo, speaking only for himself, and not for the FL Program, the MLA, or any of his associates. MODERN LANGUAGE FORUM reprints this message in the hope that it will stimulate discussion among its readers, although the ideas expressed by Mr. Parker do not necessarily represent those of the Editors.

I believe that every American boy and girl should hereafter receive at least eight years of instruction in a single second language. I believe that the present *graduate school* foreign language requirements are ridiculous and self-defeating—that they should

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be removed as quickly as they can be made unnecessary, which is what they should be. I believe that most present *undergraduate* foreign language requirements are so inadequate as to be stultifying, and should be altered to a degree that makes them defensible. I believe that every institution of higher learning should have a foreign language *entrance* requirement, expressed, not in terms of units or credits, but in terms of meaningful proficiency. I believe that foreign language study should begin in kindergarten or the first grade, and should be pursued to the point that it becomes functional and constitutes a challenge to teachers of all other subjects. I believe that foreign languages should be taught in the *last two years* of every high school, whether or not administrative complexities permit their also being offered in the first two years. I believe that for the bachelor of arts degree we should eventually require proficiency in a *second* foreign language, with emphasis given some of the presently uncommon or exotic languages, particularly for students working in some of the social science fields. I believe, finally, that *all* language instruction should emphasize the *nature* and structure of language, and should introduce students to the techniques with which, using modern equipment, they can teach themselves any languages which later in life they may discover they need. (Reprinted from MLA FL Bulletin No. 23).

K. B. W.

Reviews

Cyrille Arnavon, *Histoire littéraire des Etats-Unis*. Paris: Hachette, 1953. Paper. xv, 462 pp.

"The Miracle of the Mirror." It is always startling to see one's own face and one can never be sufficiently reassured that the reflection is true. Professor Arnavon's *Histoire littéraire des Etats-Unis*, which promises to become an important item in Franco-American literary relations, will have something of this shock for the American reader. At first glance it appears to be an erudite and sagacious treatment of American letters from the Colonial Period to the present time. The author, thoroughly grounded in the historical method, presents in his Introduction the respectable theses from which his work springs: Puritanism, Democracy, the Frontier. Conceding to chronology the importance which the historical method requires, Professor Arnavon divides American literature into nine periods: La Période coloniale (1610-1765); La Période révolutionnaire et constitutionnelle (1765-1800); Le Premier Romantisme (1800-1835); La Renaissance transcendentaliste (1835-1860); La Guerre de sécession (1861-1865); L'Après-guerre (1865-1890); Vers les Etats-Unis d'aujourd'hui (1890-1915); La Période contemporaine (1915-1940); Les Dix Dernières Années (1940-1950). The author then proceeds to analyze the growth and development of American letters from their hesitant, imitative beginnings to the slow awakening of national awareness in the nineteenth century and the articulate literary expression which such awareness brought. Endowed with a brilliant gift for analysis and an impressive mastery of his material, Professor Arnavon was certain to add a distinguished volume of scholarship and erudition to a subject which has already been treated by many masters. But he has done more than this. He has given us a full-length portrait of American efforts to find intellectual independence from Europe and freedom of artistic expression in literature. Slowly there emerges from this volume the drama of America's debt to the Old World, the burden of tradition, the failures of provincialism and partial expression, the futility of imitation, and the occasional outstanding success when an individual artist succeeds in imposing his vision of the world on a resistant, suspicious social group. The pervasive conviction behind Professor Arnavon's book is the necessary conflict between the individual and society which confers on a work of art the

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highest qualities of excellence. Clearly convinced that artistic values exist, that literary quality is perceptible if not measurable, and that literature is a precious heritage of our civilization, the author inspects one work after another in a series of portraits that represent the essence of his enormous reading. He has been impartial if this means that he has taken the trouble to become thoroughly familiar with the writers he discusses. But his impartiality is not so scientific nor academic that it prevents his taking a final stand, pronouncing somewhat imperturbably on the authors he has examined.

The America which Professor Arnavon analyzes has not always been a friendly soil to the creative artist. "Le xviii^e siècle, on l'a constaté, marque souvent un piétinement aux colonies. La culture s'étouffe dans l'enlissement provincial." (p. 24) One cannot explain the sterility of Colonial American literature except, perhaps, to say that art cannot be a positive value in a society dominated by theology, puritanism, concern for civic matters. Geographic isolation played its part. Whatever the explanation, American Colonial society was singularly insensitive to art. Even Benjamin Franklin: "Mais la philosophie de Franklin, au sens populaire que le terme prend chez lui, reste une conception de la vie, bourgeoise, étriquée, sans élan et sans profondeur vraie." (p. 30).

"La littérature d'imagination n'apparaît sur le continent américain que postérieurement à la période coloniale." (p. 60). "La première prise de conscience littéraire sera celle d'anciens étudiants de Harvard qui iront parachever en Europe des humanités plus substantielles que celles que pouvait leur offrir leur *alma mater*." (p. 125). With the Transcendentalists the New World begins to find its voice. "Strictement localisé, à l'origine, à Concord et à Boston, ce phénomène détermine l'expression américaine irrévocablement . . . à partir de 1835 environ, la prise de conscience nationale qui domine toutes les oeuvres de premier plan ultérieures est clairement pressentie. Malgré des jugements de valeur très dissemblables, portés sur ce groupe d'écrivains dont la maturité coïncide avec le milieu du siècle, nul ne pourra nier l'efficacité de leur exemple." (pp. 132-133).

Emerson will influence Santayana, William James; Dreiser will collect the thoughts of Thoreau; a line of continuity will pass from Whitman to Sandburg and Hart Crane. Of all of these Whitman was perhaps most typical of American genius. In a remarkable passage Professor Arnavon defines the position of Whitman in American letters. "Malgré des scories en masse, il reste le premier qui ait appréhendé globalement cette

Amérique socialement fluide, païenne, antilivresque, dionysiaque mais puissamment féconde qu'ont comprise après lui Dreiser, Sherwood Anderson ou Sandburg. Sur ce phénomène démographique et social, étranger de toute évidence aux décantations de l'art humaniste et classique, il a calqué sa personnalité et son poème. Poème protéiforme, inégale, rebelle aux traditions anglaises, d'une veine baroque et, à l'échelle des très grandes oeuvres, peut-être éphémère, mais qui demeure à la fois monument et symbole imposants de l'américanisme." (p. 182).

Professor Arnavon says of the American novel, so widely admired in France: "L'âge du roman américain passera-t-il demain pour un âge d'or?" (p. 311). Whatever the answer to such a question, it is within the area of Realism that America was to find its most authentic literary expression. "L'esthétisme, fruit des civilisations à leur déclin, est de toute évidence étranger au courant central de la pensée américaine; rien de commun entre le pionnier et l'amateur d'émotions esthétiques pures. Le moralisme anglo-saxon comme l'idéologie démocratique sont aux antipodes des recherches quintessenciées ou des poses alanguies coutumières à l'esprit 'fin de siècle.'" (p. 288). The Realistic novel, after 1870, becomes the essential *genre* of a materialistically minded civilization. From its beginnings after the Civil War (Eggleston, Kirkland, Howe, Howells), through the hesitations of the turn of the century (London, Sinclair, Herrick), through the estheticism of a Saltus, a Hunecker, a James, the novel was to find its way to becoming the dominant form represented by so many figures of importance: Dreiser, Lewis, Anderson, Hemingway, Dos Passos, Steinbeck, Farrell, Marquand, Miller, Faulkner, Caldwell, Wolfe. Speaking of the period of 1915-1940 Professor Arnavon says: "... la marche ascendente du roman, d'un roman calqué sur la vie réelle, et qui s'en intègre toujours davantage la substance, est le fait saillant." (p. 312).

In spite of the growth of the Realistic novel, the cause of poetry was not forgotten in America during the early years of the twentieth century. With the Imagists American poetry acquired an international character which brought it into contact with French ideas and allied it to the poetic experimentation carried on in Britain. Dickinson, Robinson, Frost, Masters, Sandburg, Lindsay, Jeffers had already rediscovered the American scene. With Pound, Amy Lowell, H. D., Fletcher, American poetry acquired a science of poetics. "La doctrine... implique avant toute chose l'abandon des rhétoriques héritées ou acquises. C'est là l'une des leçons les plus fécondes du symbolisme français, un symbolisme glané par beaucoup à travers les leçons de Remy de Gourmont qui

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devait lui-même, peu de temps avant sa disparition, encourager cette tentative. Les symbolistes, toutefois, recommandaient l'analogie musicale, les polyvalences suggestives des sons, le contour flou plutôt que la ligne tranchée. Les Américains prônent au contraire la rigueur, la netteté de trait, la concentration volontaire, plus puissante encore à leurs yeux pour avoir rejeté les rythmes attendus de la prosodie classique . . . ils recherchent dans l'image la beauté plastique, l'équilibre des formes, le rapport harmonieux ou heurté des couleurs." Thus Professor Arnavon points up the debt to French Parnassian poetry rather than to Symbolism. In Eliot American poetry finds its other great exponent after the First World War. The result is a literary hermeticism reminiscent of Mallarmé or Valéry. . . . ces contractions logiques, ces télescopages de propositions, de mots juxtaposés, cet abandon du moyen terme logique (laissé à la prose) deviendront une manière ésotérique que la poésie vous oppose come une façade impénétrable." (pp. 370-371).

One has reached the other extreme. If American literature in its Colonial beginnings was arid and austere, has it now not become Byzantine and precious as a result of its Europeanization? Especially in recent years this would seem to be the case. Speaking of the New Criticism, Professor Arnavon wonders what significance remains to the term "American." "Renonçant à l'américanisme conscient qui avait prévalu dans les années 1920, ces poètes-critiques se rapprochent au contraire d'écrivains britanniques qui embrassent des préoccupations semblables. A suivre leurs difficiles débats—où un étranger de langue se sentira nécessairement mal à l'aise—on aura même l'impression que la notion d'américanisme se désagrège, perdant toute signification essentielle." (p. 422). But is there not another danger to art and poetry in the United States today? The danger of a certain scientific bias which could be detrimental to all creative work? As he says of I. A. Richards and of the latter's attempt to explain literary texts by first translating them into Basic English: "A l'arrière-plan de ces initiatives on retrouverait, en partie camouflée par la subtilité alexandrine de l'auteur, l'éternelle illusion scientiste: l'art s'explique, se dissèque, se décompose, pourrait-on dire, quantitativement." Literature, overly nourished by the Universities today, risks separation from reality and is endangered not by intellectualism, but by gratuity. Speaking of recent poetry Professor Arnavon says: "Le trait commun de ces poètes . . . est d'être marqués par la tradition universitaire. . . . Beaucoup produisent abondamment sous toutes les espèces de la littérature critique, beaucoup font de l'enseignement, des conférences, du journalisme. Nécessité sans doute, mais qui introduit parfois pour nous, comme dans une pénombre

menaçante, par-delà un texte ingénieux d'une réelle richesse verbale et rythmique, le spectre de la gratuité . . ." (p. 434).

Professor Arnavon concludes on a sombre note: "En concluant, on peut se demander si la littérature américaine s'achemine vers un désert comme celui des années 1865-1885 ou, plus grave, si elle ne va pas sombrer dans un déclin général de la culture occidentale." (p. 437). One cannot help but see the broader issue, raised by Sartre in *Qu'est-ce que la littérature?* and of which such a question is necessarily a part. Without creators and without an enlightened public who give importance to their work, art forms cannot exist. Professor Arnavon's history of American letters is more than a history. It is an investigation, historical and methodical, of the literary phenomenon as it has occurred in the United States. The questions which his book raises are philosophical in nature and the reader will not fail to ask them. What absolute standards do we possess for judging works of art? Are transcendent values a matter of quantitative human agreement? What social conditions are necessary for the highest flowering of human endowment? Is there a climate favorable to the fostering of art and another that is hostile? Does indifference finally exact a tragic toll? It is, however, not the author's purpose to raise these questions directly nor to answer them. They are a by-product of the historical method by which his book advances, a method which allows an impartial investigation to occur, but which does not preclude conviction and commitment on the part of its author. Professor Arnavon's *Histoire littéraire des Etats-Unis* is a work of synthesis and judgment, ". . . (une) de ces synthèses largement empiriques sur l'homme et l'oeuvre auxquelles la méthode historique nous avait accoutumés . . ." (p. 426) as he says in another context. And the conclusion to his book would certainly imply an optimistic answer to the questions we have raised: "Parce que née d'un xviii^e siècle révolutionnaire et progressiste, et façonnée tout au travers d'un xix^e siècle humanitaire et romantique, la culture américaine ne peut, sans danger de banqueroute, renier ses fondements individualistes. Il n'est, certes, pas impossible que la sauvegarde de l'individu ait changé de signe et que, dans l'ordre économique, des formules collectivistes d'inspiration soient en vue. Le *New Deal* en avait amorcé plus d'une; mais, à moins de bifurcations encore inconcevables et qui seraient, semble-t-il, abdications, les immenses richesses spirituelles du continent américain paraissent liées aux garanties politiques et judiciaires anglo-saxonnes. Une littérature enrégimentée et, disons-le, même orientée et surveillée, ou soumise à un autoritarisme quelconque—fût-il accepté et imposé par la

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majorité—tournerait le dos à la lignée de Jefferson, de Whitman comme aussi bien, pour citer des vivants, de Faulkner ou de O'Neill. Nous n'en sommes assurément pas là." (p. 438).

Oreste F. Pucciani.

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THAIS S. LINDSTROM, *Tolstoï en France* (1886-1910). Paris: Institut d'Etudes Slaves de l'Université de Paris, 1952. Paper. 172 pp.

Most students of French literature are more or less conversant with the impact on French letters and thought of the great nineteenth-and early twentieth-century Russian writers, Tourguénev, Dostoïevski, Gogol, and Tolstoï, but, for the most part our ideas are vague and general because these writers have been lumped together and their influence has been studied as a collective thing. Here is a work which is valuable because it limits itself to one author—Tolstoï—and because it deals with particulars. It is a significant contribution to studies in comparative literature and should receive the widest possible attention. The fact that it concerns an influence from abroad which was different from but coincident with the *fin de siècle* trends makes the information which it embodies basic to a complete understanding of all the developments which have subsequently taken place in French literature. Some of the men who were most influenced, such as Jules Romains and Romain Rolland, have remained outstanding writers and thinkers in our own day.

The acceptance of this work for publication by the Institut d'Etudes Slaves de l'Université de Paris, at the instance of its president, André Mazon, is enough in itself to enlist one's immediate attention. A still further recommendation is the Préface which the distinguished scholar of comparative literature, M. Jean-Marie Carré, has seen fit to write for the book.

In his Préface M. Carré says, concerning Miss Lindstrom's work: ". . . elle a suivi avec beaucoup de diligence et de précision la fortune de Tolstoï en France; . . . elle a fidèlement retracé les étapes de sa destinée littéraire; . . . elle a tenu à examiner les notes et récits des pèlerins français de Iasnaïa Poliana." (p. 7)

Miss Lindstrom is, of course, particularly qualified to treat this subject from all its facets, since she is thoroughly acquainted with both

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Russian and French and is widely read in the literatures of these two languages. And still, she has had to do a prodigious amount of research into the lives, travels, journals, articles and books of the Frenchmen who visited Tolstoï in Russia, as well as of those who fell under his sway indirectly, and whose works and thoughts were in some way colored by him.

To make her task more difficult, she has had to take into account the great evolution of the thought of Tolstoï during the period of his productivity and the influences he exerted not only as a man of letters but as an innovating theorist on such matters as art, religion and social reform, who turned his back on the whole structure of civilization as it existed in his age.

She takes as the primary object of her book "de mettre en valeur les deux aspects de l'action de Tolstoï en analysant, d'une part, la réaction de la grande critique qui s'empare de l'oeuvre du prédicateur et du romancier pour tenter d'en engager une valeur commune, et de la ramener à un tout cohérent et fermé; d'autre part, la réaction des jeunes lettrés dont quelques-uns modifient la pensée de Tolstoï selon leurs propres tendances, tandis que d'autres la reflètent en totalité ou enfin se rattachent à cette foi nouvelle, convaincus par les impératifs de ses sermons et par l'exemple éclatant de sa conversion." (p. 12)

She begins the first part of her study by sketching for us the ways in which the French first became acquainted with the works of Tolstoï, nearly two decades after the publication of his *La Guerre et la Paix* (1869), citing Eugène de Vogüé's *Roman Russe* (1886)—which she compares in importance with Mme. de Staël's *De l'Allemagne*—as the work which served to introduce him, and which served too as a weapon in an attack against naturalism. It was as a novelist that France first came to know Tolstoï, but by that time he had already repudiated most of his early work and was launching "les premiers éléments de sa nouvelle doctrine sociale et religieuse" (p. 11). Soon after the appearance of Vogüé's work, Tolstoï had become a favorite subject of conversation in France. His conversion received wide attention, and his reputation was still further reinforced by the Franco-Russian alliance and by the unusual wave of social consciousness which was sweeping France at the time. The partisans of this movement found encouragement in his example. Vogüé, who admired the evangelism and the moral temperament of this writer, as well as his spirit of compassion toward people aspiring toward a better life, felt that French literature, in opening itself

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to scientific currents, had turned aside from its high moral function. Many another Frenchman felt as did he.

Miss Lindstrom examines the reactions to Tolstoï of such literary historians and critics as Emile Hennequin and Jules Lemaître; she studies the attitudes of established writers, such as Paul Bourget and Henri Bordeaux; she looks into his influence on younger writers who were just in the process of being molded, such as Paul Margueritte and the members of l'Abbaye de Créteil (Romains, Arcos, Duhamel, Durtain and Vildrac); and she gives particular attention to Romain Rolland, for perhaps none was so particularly influenced as he, whose hero, Jean Christophe, like Tolstoï, was "grand de cœur . . . ne se résigne à la médiocrité de l'âme . . . chaque jour, un triste combat sans bonheur, sans grandeur, livré dans la solitude et le silence" (p. 57). Loving others, he decides, like Tolstoï, to dedicate himself to art and to seek inspiration among the people.

While nearly everyone in France admired the works of the great Russian, not everyone agreed with everything he had to say. Many felt there was a lack of determinism in his works, anarchy of thought, failure to recognize the complexity of life, lack of ability to deal with pure ideas. Some disliked his condemnation of science. Both Péguy and Maurice Barrès denounced his pacifism and the principle of non-resistance.

Tolstoï's *Qu'est-ce que l'Art?* was criticized by both René Doumic and Emilie Faguet when it appeared in France, and some commentators of the period have felt that it cost Tolstoï the sympathies of many of the literary world and estranged others who had followed the development of his philosophy with interest. However, his dictum that it is the artist's duty to promote the fraternal union of men was followed by the group of the Abbaye, and Romain Rolland was soon engaged in a campaign for a popular theatre in Paris, and was contributing plays to realize that end.

In the second part of her book, which M. Carré calls "presque entièrement neuve" and which he says "restait à faire," Miss Lindstrom passes in review the opinions of all those travelers from France who had firsthand contact with Tolstoï in Russia, and reports their impressions as set forth in journals, letters, newspapers and books. In some ways this is the most interesting part of her book, for it contains innumerable impressions of the Russian author as a man, and offers an intimate picture of his family life and his relations with the peasants on his vast

estate. The hospitality which he showed to all comers was prodigal. His interest in them and in what they might tell him to enlighten him was sincere. There was a constant stream of "slavisants," men of letters, intellectual pacifists, and journalists knocking at his door. Most of them found entry, and were welcomed to stay long enough to get an intimate picture of the man they sought to know. They were, for the most part, persons who are little known today, but they spoke invariably of his "activité quasi surhumaine," and of his "amour multiple du prochain qui était à la fois le point de départ et le point d'aboutissement de son enseignement" (p. 151).

Miss Lindstrom concludes her study thus: "Le lecteur ordinaire de l'oeuvre romanesque de Tolstoï y rencontrait les éléments de sa vie particulière et s'identifiait à ses héros. Les intellectuels français y trouvaient leurs affirmations sur la nécessité d'un art populaire, l'importance grandissante de la collectivité et l'obligation de faire de la conscience individuelle la base morale des rapports entre les hommes. Donc, que ce fût sur le plan du réalisme et de l'émotion, ou sur celui de la pensée, les deux groupes distincts des lecteurs français de Tolstoï s'accordaient pour reconnaître en lui une grande *universalité*." (p. 153) The visitors who saw him at home "ont créé une nouvelle vision de la famille Tolstoï . . . ils voyaient combien Tolstoï symbolisait l'indépendance spirituelle . . . la liberté individuelle" (p. 153).

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OTTO FRIEDRICH BOLLNOW, *Rilke*. Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer Verlag, 1951. 355 pp.

In view of the alarming volume of Rilke literature which continues to accumulate, the present book is distinguished in three respects. For one thing, it is the first to focus centrally upon the work of Rilke's very last years, particularly the French poems. For another, this is not merely a book by a philosopher, but one which in the most basic sense is a philosophical book; and finally it stands by itself in quality alone, in that it perfects the use of a critical approach which seemed until very recently to have fallen into some neglect: the method of interpretation, of exegesis concerned purely with understanding.

This new Rilke book sets out not from the "late Rilke" but rather from the "mature Rilke." Only beginning with *Malte Laurids Brigge*—

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produced among other things under the influence of Kierkegaard 1904-1910—does Rilke become the poet whom Bollnow's portrait of him represents, that is, the poet of man. The bold and exciting thing in Bollnow's treatment, which actually is rendered with great simplicity and modesty, is his starting out with a sharply formulated thesis which is modified only toward the end of the book and is finally set aside.

In the philosophical thesis introduced at the beginning, the substance of Rilke's work is described as "anthropological" and "existential." "Anthropological," then, is here used in the sense of "philosophical anthropology," as the term has very recently come to be accepted in Germany to some extent. And "existential" then is not to be understood here in the sense of Martin Heidegger's or Karl Jaspers' philosophy, since both men have declared themselves in express opposition to philosophical anthropology. Bollnow simply means that Rilke's mature work deals with man. Its subject is fundamentally the whole dubiousness of man. Its essential achievement is that it uncovers new levels of meaning in human existence—not, of course, by means of an abstract philosophical approach, but with the strange means of revelation peculiar to a symbolic poet. Rilke's distinguishing trait, according to Bollnow's thesis, is that he does not start from some committed, traditional conception of man but instead "searches out new traits from the unfathomable darkness and reaches *new* formulations about the nature of human existence." (p. 8)¹ "And that is why he (and not some other) is the poet of our time" (p. 8).

Everything else about Rilke's work is of interest only to the extent that it is related to this task, which became a pervasive theme only in his last period of creativity. According to Bollnow's introductory thesis, even that which in Rilke's work seems "on the surface to be presented as metaphysical doctrine is to be interpreted in terms of its anthropological substance."

The interpretation of the angel-motif is the most impressive example of the high seriousness and the incisive philosophical boldness with which Bollnow pursues his hypothesis. "Praise the world to the angel" (9th Elegy), "reduced anthropologically, simply means 'Praise the world!' The concept of the angel can be deleted here . . ." Why? According to Bollnow, Rilke's angel is the *exemplum* of an essentially different form of existence from that of man. The function of this

¹Page references in parentheses are to Bollnow's book. Translations from Bollnow mine.—Transl.

exemplum or model is to clarify by contrast the essence of *human* existence. "Who, if I cried, would hear me among the angelic orders?"² if we take the existential reduction seriously, is completely equivalent to: no one would hear me if I cried." (p. 105). That the angel does not hear man simply means "that in his despair every hand and foothold on some kind of order around him has broken away . . ." (p. 104). The poet is actually, then, *not* speaking of the angel but of man only. "The concept of the angel can be deleted here without any essential change in meaning . . ." (p. 109). That is to say, a "*metaphysical* interpretation" of the angel "is irrelevant, is playful metaphysics" (p. 108).

This, then, transcends considerably a mere attempt to relate Rilke and Existentialism within the framework of the history of ideas. This relationship had already been shown in Hans Urs von Balthasar's *Apokalypse der deutschen Seele*³ and in Otto Friedrich Bollnow's own book, *Existenzphilosophie*.⁴ The connection is more than the problem of death. There is, besides, the problem of human existence as a problem of temporality. In this form, it appears in Rilke's work as the motif of childhood, but also, above all, as that of fragility, of vanishing ("Schwinden"), of "ravishing time." Already in his book on Existentialism, Bollnow had gone quite far in showing the similarity between the theme of temporality in Rilke and in the doctrine of Existentialism. In his present book on Rilke he formulates Rilke's answer as follows: "When man grasps the moment resolutely, he reaches something absolute which is immune to the transitoriness of this-worldly existence." In the same way, an Existentialist interpretation of a number of important Rilkean themes easily suggests itself, such as the themes of endangerment, of precision ("Genauigkeit") in contrast to distraction ("Zerstreuung") and to Heidegger's concept of "Verfallensein,"⁵ and many others. The essential relationship between finiteness and "Saglichkeit" in the *Elegies* seems to point to Heidegger's most recent philosophy of language. But Bollnow goes further this time. He is concerned with interpreting the concept of Praising ("Rühmung"), which holds the key to Rilke's view of the function of the poet. Bollnow explains praise, as it is used here, as "the process by which a higher

²Transl. by J. B. Leishman and S. Spender, *The Duino Elegies* (New York, 1939), p. 21. Hereafter referred to as *Elegies*.

³Salzburg, etc. 1937-38. 3 vols.

⁴Stuttgart, 1949.

⁵In his introduction to four of Heidegger's essays in English translation, Werner Brock explains "Verfallen" as "the potentiality of Dasein of falling a prey to the things in the world and of becoming alienated to its own authentic possibilities, intentions and endeavors." *Existence and Being* (London, 1949), p. 42.

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form of existence becomes manifest" (p. 208), and praising as allowing truth to come out into the open, in the sense in which Heidegger speaks truth as *a-letheia*. Regardless of the adequacy of this interpretation of Rilke's "Rühmen" and "Preisen," it opposes in a convincingly rational way all cheap mystical interpretations of Rilke. And this is probably one of the particularly outstanding merits of Bollnow's book, which itself deserves highest praise.

It is more than simply an Existentialist theory about Rilke's interpretations of human existence. In his thorough interpretations of Rilke's last poems, particularly the French ones, Bollnow transcends and overcomes the central thesis at the beginning which we have been following so far. As he skillfully summarizes and penetrates this material and as he attempts to interpret the "short, puzzling suggestions" to be found in it, Bollnow gradually comes to the realization that too Existentialist an interpretation of Rilke is inadequate.

The question now is whether, once he has dismissed Existentialist categories, his only alternatives are to fall back on those of the literary historian or to "metaphysical" means of interpretation. The last part of Bollnow's book seems to point to something else altogether, namely, that the categories of philosophical anthropology are *richer* than those of Existentialism.

Bollnow starts out cautiously: "It is the problem of how the harshness of existential experiences are arched over by a new and higher feeling of serenity ('Getragensein')."

Kierkegaard had used the Biblical phrase of the "fullness of time" to characterize the moment of fulfillment. Nietzsche spoke of the most intensive moments ("höchste Zustände"). Rilke says:

Look, I am living. On what? Neither childhood nor future are growing less . . . Supernumerous existence wells up in my heart.*

But is he really moving here toward revoking the concept of the essential finiteness of existence? Lovers "so blissfully touch; because the caress persists ("verhalt"), because you perceive thereunder pure duration."⁷ In the letters of 1897-1914,⁸ for that matter, Rilke has an enlightening comment on an attempt by the Princess Thurn and Taxis-Hohenlohe to translate this passage into Italian. He insists that he in-

**Elegies*, p. 77.

⁷*Elegies*, p. 33.

⁸(Insel Verlag, 1950), I, 452.

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tended it to be taken completely literally, the lover's caress lending *duration* to the place he covers with his hand.

Bollnow insists at every step on the almost superhuman multivalence, and the enormous number of overlapping and intersecting levels in Rilke's work. Egotistically, the reader wishes there were sufficient space, too, for the History of God (Letter to L. H. and *Malte*) in Bollnow's book, which offers so much help and so many enlightening avenues to the interpretation of other aspects of Rilke. Bollnow approaches the all too famous and too often misused letter to Hulewicz with a degree of skepticism which is downright sensational.

This Rilke book is like an academy of the art of interpretation. If it contained nothing besides the careful interpretation of the rose symbol in Rilke, carried through in exemplary *esprit fin*, this alone would make it seem to me one of the most interesting volumes, sprung from the altruism of pure devotion to the understanding and interpreting of the reality of the mind and spirit. But it contains besides an abundance of probably some of the greatest and most valuable interpretations that have been put to paper in the German language since Gundolf. The hero, the woman in love ("die Liebende"), the child, the singer, the fountain, the ball, the mirror, the scales—these are some of the other symbols the delicacy of interpretation of which Bollnow has carried to perfection. Of many others, I should like to mention especially the wonderful interpretation of the Tenth Elegy. One wishes only that the "puppet," too, had its deserved place among these basic Rilkean figures.

There is a philosophical anthropological motif—a strain of motifs—which pervades Bollnow's picture of Rilke, the picture of the mature Rilke. It appears as the motif of distance in "Erlebnis II" (Spain, at the beginning of 1913); it develops into the motif of discretion in all the different shades of meaning which the word can have, from:

Les anges, sont-ils devenus discrets!

Le mien à peine m'interroge!

back to the much earlier Rilkean theme of the discretion between God and man, the pure "relation," and "intransitive" love; and then again to the French poems where he takes it through all degrees up to God's "absence ardente."

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The motif appears with a slight difference as the problem of distinction both in the earlier work of the poet, to which almost surprisingly Bollnow does not refer, and in the later poems. "All the living make the mistake of drawing too sharp distinctions."⁹ "... Love takes no heed of our divisions . . ." ¹⁰ The poet's concern is the distinction between life and death, between waking and sleep, between consciousness and the unconscious, between revelation and concealment. The rose shows us

cet ineffable accord du néant et de l'être
que nous ignorons.

It is in this sense that Rilke—and hardly the esthete—chose as an epitaph

Rose, oh pure contradiction, joy
To be no-one's sleep beneath
So many eyelids.¹¹

In a compelling synthesis, Bollnow shows how the poet's most profound and most sublime motifs converge in these three lines.

The facing and the cancelling-out of contradictions again appears as a motif in the poet's concern with the distinction and the lack of distinction between safety and endangerment. "Danger has become safer than safety" (*Malte*). "... Defencelessness! Our last and best resource! We turned you inside out us . . ." ¹² Human existence is "menacé et sauvé." Not until Orpheus' form of existence do these two find their union. Again there appears to be a possible connection with Nietzsche's "höchste Zustände." And is not the picture of Orpheus that Rilke sets up a creation of values in Nietzsche's sense? For this image does not remain in the realm of pure esthetics. It does not claim to be confined there, or rather, it does not belong there from the start. Man as poet in the person of Orpheus is rather a human ideal ("Vorbild") and is to that extent a challenge and full of human relevance ("Verbindlichkeit"). It is this last term which runs through Bollnow's

⁹*Elegies*, p. 25.

¹⁰Letter to L. H., *War-time Letters of R.M.R.*, transl. by M. D. H. Norton (New York, 1940), p. 56.

¹¹Transl. by E. M. Butler; *Rilke* (Cambridge, England, 1941), p. 410. For "Lust," "desire" seems more accurate than "joy."—Transl.

¹²*Later Poems*, transl. by J. B. Leishman (London, 1938), p. 125: "Was uns schliesslich birgt, ist unser Schutzlossein und dass wirs so ins Offne wandten . . ." *Späte Gedichte* (1935), p. 90.

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Rilke book with strange philosophic seriousness. For this book, too, is more than a study in esthetics or the fitting of Rilke's poetic *oeuvre* into a philosophic system.

There does, however, remain the question whether Orpheus' kind of existence, this "enduring of contradiction," is not already superhuman and otherworldly. Can it still be described, as Bollnow suggests with utmost caution, as a condition of "perfection resting suspended in itself" or, more than that, as a condition of "grace"?

Notre avant-dernier mot
serait un mot de misère,
mais devant la conscience-mère
le tout dernier sera beau.

"By these lines, the entire existential interpretation of man contained in the Elegies—which is one of *misère*, of the misery of man—is set aside as the one before the last and hence a provisional one, and is replaced by a last word of affirmation—and affirmation quite different from the stubborn, desperate affirmation of the here and now in the Elegies, because it has grown out of a feeling of overflowing happiness." (p. 346).

Man "can accomplish unconditional perfection in the realm of the finite, the most finite possible; here, in this finite realm—this is the great paradox of man—he reaches the absolute" (p. 140). In relation to an anthropological *philosophy*, these statements seem dangerous and not without ambiguity. The "absolute," after all, remains in the realm of the here and now, in connection with the here and now and all that which is *not* ("das Hiesige und Nichtbiesige") according to the manifesto of the letter to L.H.—but this means precisely that it does *not* move into a *Beyond*. According to the letter to Hulewicz, the "*definitive affirmation*" in the Elegies does not aim at a "Beyond whose shadow darkens the earth" but is directed in "purely earthly, deeply earthly, blissfully earthly consciousness" upon the given facts of terrestrial, of, in the broadest sense, *worldly* existence."¹³ According to the letters to L.H. and Hulewicz, the meaning of the "*identité d'absence et de présence qui, peut-être, constitue l'équation fondamentale de notre vie*" is a positive and an affirmative one—but in no case can it be an extra-worldly meaning! It can be only philosophic-anthropological.

¹³*Letters of R.M.R.*, transl. by J. B. Greene and M. D. H. Norton (New York, 1947), II, 342.

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No matter where further discussion of Bollnow's book might lead, it accomplishes what he himself once urged as "creative understanding."

The unity of mankind is based on unified understanding, as it has become possible to this degree of completeness only in our century. And not only that: we are not merely receptive: we increase and deepen, by our understanding, the content of this world of mind and spirit. It is in a process of constant growth, not only because of the immediate creations rising out of the subconscious but just as much because of the conscious work of interpreting, done with complete clarity of mind.¹⁴

It would be extremely helpful if in a new edition a systematic index could be added to this important book. Many books on Rilke spoil one's reading of him. This book *serves* Rilke. It is therefore, literally, an essential book and at the same time one that contains wisdom.

Herman Wein¹⁵

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EUGENE LABICHE, *Un Chapeau de paille d'Italie*. Edited by Alexander Y. Kroff and Karl G. Bottke. New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1952. Cloth. xi, 222 pp. \$2.25.

In American schools such wide and prolonged popularity has been enjoyed by *Le Voyage de Monsieur Perrichon* that many a student and, I fear, many a teacher, has come to regard that pleasant comedy as the principal if not the sole claim to fame of its author, Eugène Labiche. The recent school edition of *Un Chapeau de paille d'Italie* ought to go far toward correcting this impression. For the editors have not only presented to American students an excellent Labiche play, worthy of their attention, but have prefaced the text with an exceptionally thorough and informative study of the author's life and works. Forty-six pages are devoted to this introductory material, which includes, in addition to the biographical and bibliographical data, an examination of the *vaudeville* genre, remarks on Labiche's various collaborators, an analysis of *Un Chapeau*, and a detailed history of the

¹⁴O. F. Bollnow, *Die Methode der Geisteswissenschaften* (Mainz, 1950).

¹⁵Distinguished ("ausserordentlicher") Professor of Philosophy at the University of Göttingen. This article was translated from the German by Miss Eva Schiffer, Harvard University.

comedy from its première in 1851 through its revivals, translations, adaptations, and recent film versions.

For those who might be surprised at the length and scope of this preamble to a text designed for second-year students of French, it is explained in an *avant-propos* that the introduction "should be of particular interest to students taking advanced courses in the modern theater." The stated purpose is to help fill a "regrettable lacuna" by presenting information about an important nineteenth-century playwright heretofore neglected in anthologies of the period. It seems, then, that the book is really intended for students of two different levels: linguistic youngsters who are struggling with basic idioms, and also French majors who are curious about dramatic history. I am afraid, however, that very few of the former group will have much interest in or appreciation of the laboriously assembled facts comprising the introduction, and that on the other hand the majority of the advanced students, who would profit from this material, are not likely to know of its existence, the frequent practice in upper-division courses being to use one of the aforementioned anthologies as the class text, and to do any supplementary reading of plays in non-school editions. But of course it is not the authors' fault that these seeds may fall on largely barren ground, nor can we reasonably object to receiving more than our money's worth.

Un Chapeau de paille d'Italie, one of Labiche's best and most successful plays, should prove to be a happy choice as an intermediate reader. The action is consistently lively, the situations delightfully farcical, and the dialogue refreshingly humorous. The vocabulary and idioms are not so difficult as to detract seriously from the average student's enjoyment of the comedy's wholesome gaiety. The conversational style, only slightly distorted by dramatic considerations and scarcely faded by the passage of a hundred years, should help acquaint the student with the spoken idiom, and is well suited to classroom practice in oral French. The absence of such qualities as profound character portrayal and depiction of manners (the play was written solely to amuse), and the lack of philosophical or satirical overtones such as are discernible in *Perrichon*, *La Poudre aux yeux*, *Célimare*, and other Labiche plays, are deficiencies which do not greatly diminish the play's entertainment value or its usefulness as an instrument for instruction on the second-year level.

Professors Kroff and Bottke's book reproduces without major modification the text of *Un Chapeau* as it appears in the ten-volume *Théâtre*

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of Labiche (Calmann-Lévy, 1887-1892). Some changes—mostly corrections and modernizations—have been made in the punctuation and spelling, and there are a few textual discrepancies (see below). Numerous footnotes explain references to French customs and institutions, proper names, historical allusions, puns, *sous-entendre*, etc., and translate lines which might present syntactical or idiomatic difficulty. Photographs of scenes from the play, an attractive binding, and large clear type combine to give a pleasing appearance to the book—a secondary but certainly not a negligible consideration in the choice of a text. A questionnaire and a vocabulary, which gives meanings to fit the text and is nearly complete except for obvious cognates, round out the carefully prepared edition.

The editors have sought to animate Labiche's dialogue for twentieth-century students by suggesting modern colloquial translations for a number of the dramatist's expressions: Thus, for example, "bigre!" becomes "jeepers!," "pochard" is given as "tight," and "acariâtre" is a "sourpuss," "pincer un rigodon" means to "cut a rug," and "vous êtes mort" means "you are a dead pigeon." Opinion will probably be divided as to the propriety of these and similar anachronistic renderings. I personally consider it harmless enough to appeal to student interest with such informal interpretations so long as these are not overdone and provided they preserve the tone of the original, as they usually do here. Indeed the modern phrase is often an improvement over the time-honored rendition; for instance, "so help me" seems much better than the traditional "upon my word" as a translation of "ma foi" in the given context. It is not important, for the appreciation of a light play of this kind, to retain the flavor of the period when it was written; nor is there any question of irreverence toward a writer like Labiche, as there would be in the case of a more serious dramatist. On the contrary, Labiche would undoubtedly have been happy to know that efforts would be made to modernize his locutions (in translation) for the benefit of later generations.

As no two persons will agree entirely on what lines of a reader should be explained in footnotes and which ones the student should be expected to recognize independently, it would serve no purpose for a reviewer to point out the notes which he considers superfluous or the lines he thinks might have been commented. In this connection I shall therefore merely remark that the editors seem on occasion to have been overly helpful; some expressions (e.g., "Q'est-ce que c'est que ça?") are translated which one could presume to be well known to any student capable of handling Labiche at all. I think it may be

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useful, however, to indicate differences between the present text and its model, and to note the few typographical errors I was able to detect. The following list combines these and includes miscellaneous observations on the footnotes and vocabulary.

P. 47. Date of first performance is shown as August 17, 1851. The date is given as August 14 in the *Théâtre*, and this is supported by the sources I have seen. The editors also state in the introduction (p. 17) that the première took place on August 17, though the accuracy of this date is suspect in view of the dates of pertinent reviews and articles referred to on the same page (August 17 and following). This would seem to be a double oversight; the editors have been so thorough in their presentation of the introductory material that it is hard to believe they would have changed the accepted date of the première without indicating their good reasons for suspecting it to be incorrect.

P. 50, line 16. "Elle" was "on" in the earlier edition; a relatively unimportant (accidental?) alteration.

P. 71, line 6. "Pourquoi" should be two words here.

P. 100, line 2. "Je" has replaced the "on" of the earlier edition; this seems to be an error.

P. 101. Stage directions (in longest paragraph). Preposition "à" lacks accent.

P. 120, line 12. "Croyez-le" lacks hyphen.

P. 125, line 14. Necessary exclamation point has been omitted after "Comme il me regarde."

P. 129, line 15. A note to translate "Allons, bien!" might be desirable; there is no vocabulary entry.

P. 131, between lines 4 and 5. Indication of change of speaker has been inadvertently omitted before Fadinard's line.

P. 141, line 5. No note or vocabulary entry tells what the "Gros-Caillou" is. Not that it is difficult to guess, but all other proper nouns have been footnoted or included in the vocabulary.

P. 144, line 16. The poetic license permitting "Refusez-le?" might be mentioned.

P. 144, line 20. Note and vocabulary give different translations for this expression.

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P. 146, line 6. "Chaussettes" has been substituted incorrectly for "chaussures."

P. 156, line 4. "Pshaw!," the only translation given in the vocabulary for "bah!," seems inexact here.

P. 161, line 10. Stage direction "ils se rhabillent" has been omitted following this line.

P. 162, line 12. Perhaps a better equivalent than "Wow!" could be found for "V'lan!" in this context.

P. 163, line 16. Stage direction following this line should read (according to *Théâtre*): "Sortie générale; Beauperthuis, boitant, entraîne Fadinard: la noce les suit." Indication in present text incorrectly leaves stage filled, and contains superfluous punctuation.

P. 173, line 1. A gratuitous "lui" appears, not found in earlier text.

P. 173, line 4. "Monsieur impossible" would be clearer if the suspension points between these two words had not been forgotten.

Vocabulary, p. 199. "D'abord." Meaning of "(at) first" does not fit the expression as used on p. 89, line 8, and on p. 118, line 6.

Vocab., p. 202. Under "ça," grave accent is omitted from "ah ça!" Perhaps this expression should be given a separate entry, apart from the combinations with "ça." The given translation, "well," does not seem to cover the meaning of "ah ça!" as found on p. 114, line 10.

Vocab., p. 203. "Cheveux." Entry as written makes it seem as though "cheveux" were the singular form as well as the plural.

Vocab., p. 208. "Force, adj." Should perhaps be described as an invariable adjective.

Though this list occupies considerable space on the printed page, it will be observed that it includes no really serious errors; and I wish to emphasize that I find no major adverse criticism to make.

In short, Professors Kroff and Bottke have skillfully performed a task that was well worth doing, and the result is an instructive and pleasurable reader of unquestioned merit.

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Books Received

MODERN LANGUAGE TEACHING

- Otto F. Bond, *The Reading Method: An Experiment in College French*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1953. Cloth. xii, 368 pp. \$6.50.
- Edwin T. Cornelius, Jr., *Language Teaching: A Guide for Teachers of Foreign Languages*. New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Co., 1953. Cloth. vii, 168 pp. \$2.40.

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- Edward S. LeComte, *Yet Once More. Verbal and Psychological Pattern in Milton*. New York: Liberal Arts Press, 1953. Cloth. ix, 192 pp. \$4.50.
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- Lawrence Marsden Price, *English Literature in Germany*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1953. Paper. viii, 548 pp. \$5.00.
- Alphonse V. Roche, *Provençal Regionalism*. Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1954. Cloth. xix, 271 pp.

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Arturo Torres-Rioseco, *Ensayos sobre literatura latinoamericana*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1953. Cloth. 207 pp. \$3.00.

MISCELLANEOUS

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| Wiley, Josephine L. (French) Bakersfield H.S. | Wynne, Ina R. (Spanish) Chaffey Union H.S. |
| Williams, May E. (Spanish) Chico State College (retired) 834 S. Mariposa Ave. Los Angeles 5 | Yurkunski, James M. (Spanish) Chino Junior-Senior H.S. |
| Wilson, Nadia Z. (French) Los Angeles C.C. (Evening) | Zeitlin, Marion A. (Portuguese) UCLA |
| Wilson, Russell E. (German) Hollywood H.S. | |

Submitted by
Clara M. Bissell, Chairman
Membership Committee

LIST OF SCHOOLS*

Alexander Hamilton High School, 2955 Robertson Blvd., Los Angeles 36.
 Alhambra High School, 308 West Main, Alhambra.
 Anoakia School for Girls, 701 W. Foothill Blvd., Altadena.
 Bakersfield College, Bakersfield.
 Bakersfield High School, 1200 F Street, Bakersfield.
 *Bancroft Junior High School, 929 N. Las Palmas, Los Angeles 28.
 *Barstow Union High School, 312 W. Fredericks St., Barstow.
 *Bell Gardens High School, 6119 Agra, Bell Gardens.
 *Bell Gardens Junior High School, 5841 Live Oak, Bell Gardens.
 Bell High School, 4328 Bell, Bell.
 Beverly Hills High School, 241 Moreno, Beverly Hills.
 *Brea-Olinda Union High School, E. Birch St., Brea.
 Burroughs High School, China Lake.
 California Institute of Technology, Pasadena 4.
 *Calipatria Union High School, Calipatria.
 *Capistrano Union High School, San Juan Capistrano.
 Catholic Girls' High School, 2900 W. Pico Blvd., Los Angeles 6.
 Centennial High School, 2606 N. Central Ave., Compton.
 Chaffey Union High School, 1245 N. Euclid, Ontario.
 Chino Junior-Senior High School, Riverside and 6th, Chino.
 Citrus Junior College and Union High School, 18824 E. Foothill, Azusa.
 Claremont Men's College, Claremont.
 Coachella Valley Union High School, Thermal.
 Colton Union High School, Rancho and I, Colton.
 *Compton High School, 601 Acacia, Compton.
 *Corona Junior High School, Corona.
 David Starr Jordan High School, 6480 Atlantic, Long Beach 5.
 Delano Joint Union High School, Delano.
 Dorsey High School, 3537 Farmdale, Los Angeles 16.
 Downey Union High School, 8521 E. Firestone Blvd., Downey.
 East Los Angeles Junior College, 5357 E. Brooklyn, Los Angeles 22.
 El Camino College, El Camino.
 Eliot Junior High School, 2184 N. Lake, Altadena 7.
 El Monte High School, 5546 N. Ryland, Temple City.
 El Rancho High School, 6501 S. Passos Blvd., Rivera.

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Modern Language Forum

- Emerson Junior High School, 1650 Selby, Los Angeles 24.
- *Enterprise Junior High School, 940 E. Compton, Compton.
- Escondido Union High School, 4th and Hickory, Escondido.
- Excelsior High School, 15721 Pioneer, Norwalk.
- Fairfax High School, 7850 Melrose, Los Angeles 46.
- *Frank L. Walton Junior High School, 900 W. Greenleaf, Compton.
- Franklin High School, 820 N. Avenue 54, Los Angeles 42.
- Fullerton Junior College and Union High School, 200-300 E. Chapman, Fullerton.
- Garfield High School, 5101 E. Sixth, Los Angeles 22.
- George Washington High School, 10860 S. Denker, Los Angeles 4.
- Glendale College, 1500 N. Verdugo, Glendale 8.
- Glendale High School, 1440 E. Broadway, Glendale 5.
- Herbert Hoover High School, 4474 El Cajon Blvd., San Diego 5.
- Hollywood High School, 1521 N. Highland, Hollywood 28.
- Hoover High School, 651 Glenwood, Glendale 2.
- *Hughes Junior High School, 3846 California, Long Beach 7.
- Huntington Beach High School, P.O. Box 111, Huntington Beach.
- Huntington Park High School, 6020 Miles Ave., Huntington Park.
- Immaculate Heart Academy, 2021 N. Western Ave., Los Angeles 27.
- Imperial Valley Union High School, Imperial.
- Inglewood High School, P.O. Box 28, Inglewood.
- International Language School, 923 S. Burlington, Los Angeles 7.
- John C. Fremont High School, 7676 S. San Pedro, Los Angeles 3.
- John Marshall Junior High School, 990 N. Allen, Pasadena 7.
- *John Muir College, 1905 Lincoln, Pasadena 3.
- Kearney Senior High School, 7651 Wellington, San Diego 11.
- La Verne College, La Verne.
- *Le Conte Junior High School, 1316 N. Bronson, Los Angeles 28.
- Long Beach City College, 4901 E. Carson, Long Beach 8.
- Los Angeles City College, 855 N. Vermont, Los Angeles 29.
- Los Angeles College, 241 S. Detroit, Los Angeles 36.
- Los Angeles Harbor Junior College, 1117 S. Figueroa, Wilmington.
- Los Angeles High School, 4600 W. Olympic, Los Angeles 19.
- Los Angeles State College, 855 N. Vermont, Los Angeles 29.
- Lynwood High School, 12124 Bullis Road, Lynwood.
- Marian Colbert School of Individual Instruction, 528 N. La Brea, Los Angeles 36.
- *Maricopa High School, Maricopa.
- Mark Keppel High School, 501 E. Hellman, Monterey Park.
- *Mark Twain Junior High School, 2200 Walgrove, Venice.
- Marlborough School, 5029 W. Third, Los Angeles 5.
- Marymount College and High School, 10643 Sunset Blvd., Los Angeles 24.
- McKinley Junior High School, 355 S. Oak Knoll, Pasadena 5.
- Monrovia-Duarte High School, Colorado and Madison, Monrovia.
- Montebello Senior High School, 2100 W. Cleveland, Montebello.
- Mount St. Mary's College, 12001 Chalon Rd., Los Angeles 49.
- Mt. San Antonio College, P.O. Box 801, Pomona.
- Mt. Vernon Junior High School, 4066 West 17th, Los Angeles 6.
- Narbonne High School, 25425 Walnut, Lomita.
- North Hollywood High School, 5231 Colfax, North Hollywood.
- North Hollywood Junior High School, 4525 Irvine, North Hollywood.
- Occidental College, 1600 Campus Road, Los Angeles 41.
- Pacific High School, San Bernardino.
- Palm Springs High School, Palm Springs.

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- Pomona High School, Pomona.
- Ramona Convent High School, 1700 S. Marengo, Alhambra.
- Riverside College, 3608 Terracina, Riverside.
- Rosemead High School, 9063 Mission Drive, Rosemead.
- Sacred Heart High School, 2111 Griffin, Los Angeles 31.
- St. Andrew's High School, 42 Chestnut, Pasadena 3.
- San Bernardino High School, 18th and E, San Bernardino.
- San Bernardino Valley College, 701 S. Mt. Vernon, San Bernardino.
- San Diego State College, San Diego 15.
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- San Marino High School, 2701 Huntington Dr., San Marino.
- San Pedro High School, 1001 West 15th, San Pedro.
- Santa Ana College, 1530 West 17th, Santa Ana.
- Santa Barbara High School, E. Anapamu, Santa Barbara.
- Santa Maria Junior College, 901 S. Broadway, Santa Maria.
- Santa Monica City College, 1815 Pearl St., Santa Monica.
- Scripps College, Claremont.
- South Gate Junior High School, 8926 San Vincente, South Gate.
- *Temple City Junior High School, 6623 N. Oak, Temple City.
- Thomas Starr King Junior High School, 1400 Myra, Los Angeles 27.
- *University Heights Junior High School, 2060 Eighth, Riverside.
- University High School, 11800 Texas Ave., Los Angeles 25.
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- University of California, Santa Barbara.
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- University of Redlands, Redlands.
- University of Southern California, Los Angeles 7.
- *Van Nuys Junior High School, 5435 Vesper, Van Nuys.
- *Ventura College, 2276 Poli Street, Ventura.
- Ventura High School, 2155 E. Main Street, Ventura.
- Verdugo Hills High School, 10625 Plainview, Tujunga.
- Villa Cabrini Academy, 7505 Glenoaks Blvd., Burbank.
- Vine Street School (Elementary), 955 N. Vine, Los Angeles 28.
- *Washington Junior High School, 14th St. and Cedar, Long Beach 13.
- Washington Junior High School, 1490 N. Raymond, Pasadena 3.
- Westlake School for Girls, 700 N. Faring, Los Angeles 24.
- Westmont College, 55 La Paz Road, Santa Barbara.
- Westridge School for Girls, 324 Madeline Dr., Pasadena 2.
- Whittier College, Whittier.
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- *Woodrow Wilson High School, 2839 N. Eastern, Los Angeles 32.
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